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BYE-WAYS OF ITALY.

ENGLISH CHAPEL AT THE BATHS OF LUCCA.

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LETTERS

FROM THE

BYE-WAYS OF ITALY.

BY

MRS. HENRY STISTED.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS, BY COLONEL STISTED.

LONDON:
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE-STREET
1845.

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TO THE

DOWAGER LADY KNOWLES,

IN MEMORY OF OUR LONG FRIENDSHIP,

AND AS A TOKEN OF GRATEFUL AFFECTION,

THESE LETTERS ARE INSCRIBED,

BY HER

FAITHFUL AND ATTACHED

CLOTILDA ELIZABETH STISTED.

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VANDALIA.

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LETTER I.

Villa Brodrick, Bagni di Lucca.

I HAVE, within the last hour, received your welcome commission, my dear friend. I shall do your bidding joyfully, and write to you of Italy, and our adventures abroad, till you cry "hold—enough." We love this fairest of lands, and would gladly pour out a tribute to the clime, where we have found comparative health, and enjoyed incomparable happiness during the last twelve years. To know that our industry may possibly prove useful in the education of your young group, will be a new stimulant to seek information, and verify all we have already acquired.

You tell me to urge your children to study Italian—to lure them to love its poetry—to introduce them to the arts and antiquities of the South—and, above all, to interest them in the

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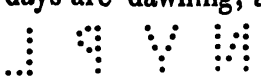
eventful history and marvellous literature of Italy. All this is daily achieved by intimate acquaintance with a country where Erasmus has truly said, "the very walls are more eloquent than the men of other states;" and I must to the utmost transcribe the speaking records of this classic land for you. I cannot, dare not, enter the lists with learned tourists and able compilers, in attempting to describe the greater cities of the South. Florence, Rome, and Naples, although inexhaustible mines in themselves, require engines of more power than mine, to open new galleries, and bring to light their gems of art.

I shall rather confine myself to exploring Italy's BYE-WAYS, and gathering the flowers which hasty travellers have passed unheeded on the high roads. I would also impart to you the sympathy and love which long acquaintance has impressed upon our hearts for a mourning people. When it is remembered what Italy was in the days of her power; when she twice sat a queen amongst nations; and again at the revival in the middle ages, when her commerce, literature, and arts, started into life, under the auspices of her flourishing republics—it is impossible not to sympathize in her present humiliation. But brighter days are dawning, and the Great Ruler



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of this world's destinies will, I trust, again vouchsafe to raise her up, and dry the patriot's tear. Of the past, suffice it to say, that, after the stormy convulsions of the war in which her sons had nobly acquitted themselves, Italy was thrown like a shattered bark on the lovely shores of her own tideless sea; stunned and dispirited she lay, but not supine; again and again she struggled to right herself, but the unassisted effort left her more disabled than before, and bereft of her ablest hands. It was then, when all seemed lost, that "hope, the charmer, lingered still behind," and she awoke to a full sense of her true interest! Italy is now *intellectually* aroused! The sceptre of political preponderance has long departed; but there is still much to glory in, and noble work for her princes and patriots to achieve, in the moral regeneration of their country. A strong impetus is already given to education in every class, and a thousand pens are working for her advancement in all that is worthiest—best. Science flourishes under the auspices of her sovereigns, who invite the genius and talent of all countries to come and discuss every discovery and invention which can benefit humanity, and the professors are welcomed to their states with all the honours due to the noblest guests. Commerce

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too revives, and her beautiful daughters the arts, have raised their drooping heads, to smile again on the land of their birth-right. Above all, morals are purifying, and much good of every kind is in progress, which it will be my happiness to detail in the course of our correspondence.

Your commands have come opportunely, for we have several excursions in view, and are meditating tours through Tuscany, Romagna, and as much of ancient Etruria, as such a valetudinarian, as I am, can explore. I must now give you some account of the smiling valley which we have made our happy home for many summers, and where we occasionally steal a winter, to commune with ourselves and with our books in luxurious seclusion.

One of the greatest difficulties sojourners in Italy have to surmount, is the choice of a permanent residence. Few places are equally healthful and agreeable in summer and winter; and many which suit some constitutions, are baneful to others. It is a source of thankfulness to us to have found a *pied de terre*, which we can enjoy at all seasons. We are indebted for our mountain home to the energy and good taste of the Honourable Mrs. Brodrick, who erected

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this small, but well arranged and picturesque villa,* for her autumn, winter, and spring residence; deserting it in summer, because unable to bear the excitement of a large society: she survived its completion but a few years, and the poor had to lament the loss of a kind benefactress. The house possesses many English comforts, and a treasure for us in the well-selected Brodrick library. The temptations to settle here, were—the remarkable salubrity of the valley, and the moral worth of its humble inhabitants, who, I rejoice to say, are not yet contaminated by the world's intercourse, though crowds from all countries resort here every summer. This concourse often affords us the pleasure of meeting old friends, and sometimes the satisfaction, amongst those who bring us letters of introduction, of making valuable new ones; but with every wish to be generally kind and useful, I fear we often appear churlish and inhospitable, for the society has now become so

* The villa now belongs to Signor Alessandro Lena, a young Lucchese, whom Mrs. Brodrick adopted in his infancy, and educated in Switzerland. He is a high-principled, spirited youth, and in the English service, where by good conduct he has been some time since appointed Deputy, or Sub-Deputy, Harbour Master of Hong Kong. It is curious, that a scion from the baths of Lucca should be already transplanted to our new possessions in China.

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large, that we are obliged, in some degree, to live retired, otherwise time, health, and comfort, would become the inevitable sacrifice.

At all seasons our worthy neighbours of the native population prove a source of interest; they are ever ready to be useful to us, and grateful for any little kindness we can render, without encroaching on our time; and I gladly bear testimony of all that has been said and written in their praise. After so many years residence, we can scarcely name a disreputable character around us, nor have we a single theft to complain of, though the villa has ten doors opening on the lawn, and the porticos are often left littered with books, pictures, and furniture, even during the night.*

The three villages around us contain a population of 1,246 souls. The mortality varies from one and a half to two per cent annually, and half of those who die are infants. The exceeding healthfulness of the air in so narrow a

* Once on a holiday, a flock of fine white ducks of ours, while swimming about the shallows of the river, were chased by some idle boys, and assailed with a shower of stones. Two were killed in the fray. A great outcry was raised against the perpetrators; the little culprits came next morning, requesting to see the Signora, and laid a couple of fine live ducks at my feet, praying me to accept them in assurance of my forgiveness.

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valley, is doubtless produced by the purifying influence of a rapid mountain river. It is to the torrent, which roars and dashes over its rocky bed at the foot of our lawn, that I attribute our being able to live uninjured, though embosomed in bays, laurels, and cypresses, with flowers growing in at every window. In general, Italian villas have no shade, from the opinion that trees produce bad air around a house.

The Lima, a tributary stream of the Serchio, however salubrious and picturesque, is a notorious offender, and has twice since our residence here, been swelled by the first autumnal rains to so frightful a flood, that mills, bridges, and lastly, a whole village, were swept away by its impetuosity. On hearing of the latter catastrophy, we sent our niece, accompanied by our young friend, Miss Sturt, and a careful attendant, up the river, to inquire for the poor sufferers. After scrambling for three miles over a road, rendered nearly impassable by rocks and trees, which the storm had carried down the mountain, they reached the site of the former hamlet, and found it the bed of a torrent, without a vestige of human habitation left, to mark where it had stood. The houseless villagers were in the adjoining wood, where they had passed the night under the chesnut trees.

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They were forty-three in number, men, women, and children. No murmur of complaint was to be heard, nor did any one of them beg, or exaggerate their losses; on the contrary, each had mercies to record, in having their lives spared, and some article of property to show, which they had saved. Their gratitude was unbounded on receiving a few scudi for present subsistence, with the promise of future aid. A subscription was soon made for them by the exertions of our valued friend, the Rev. Frederick Ricketts,* who had gratuitously performed the duties of Chaplain for us that summer, and enough was raised to relieve all, and leave 200 scudi towards rebuilding their habitations.

The inundation of the foregoing year afforded a very different scene. That old insurgent, the Serchio, which flows through a wide valley, running nearly at right angles with ours, after carrying away three bridges, leading towards Modena, and receiving the accumulated waters

* With heartfelt grief we are now mourning the loss of this estimable man, who, when the above was written, adorned all the relations of life. The faithful and zealous Minister of his Divine Master—the friend and benefactor of the poor—the accomplished scholar and elegant gentleman—the charm of every social circle, and the pride and delight of his now bereaved family.

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of its fellow culprit, the Lima, dashed on with such force and fury towards Lucca, that it swept away nearly half a-mile of the high road which runs along the mountain side, and, in that part, forty feet above the usual height of the stream, leaving a bare cliff down to the water's edge.

The terrible fact that we were all prisoners, was soon generally known amongst the English, of whom above twenty families had been induced, by a fine Autumn, to prolong their stay to the beginning of October. To torrents of rain, and the most fearful storm which had darkened the atmosphere like an eclipse, and bent every tree nearly to the ground, succeeded a fine bright sunshine and warm genial day. Soon every one was out on horse-back—in open sedan-chairs—and various vehicles, to judge for themselves of our predicament. The waters were still high, and after two miles we found the road too much choked up with sand to proceed, but the bare cliff was before us, and the Serchio, reckless of its mischief, had formed for itself a new bed, exactly where every evening before we had enjoyed our drive. The reconnoiterers brought to a stand, torrents of complaints poured forth on all sides, under the belief that there was no probable means of escape from the baths, and that less than six

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month's labour could not possibly cut down the high cliff to form another road.

The thought of passing a winter amongst the mountains, was an idea too horrible for several young damsels, who already speculated on the pleasures and conquests of the Pitti Balls and Cascine rides at Florence. "I'll scramble over the mountain at any risk," said one. "I'll ford the river," cried another. "Papa will surely construct wooden bridges rather than keep us here," said a third. I cannot remember all the various expedients of escape which so highly amused us, who, the winter before, had found the Bagni a providential retreat from cholera, and fully enjoyed the happy valley, with its sublime wintery aspect, and the conversation of their humble, but intelligent neighbours.

However, these murmurers were soon put to shame by the admirable spirit of the Lucchese government. A hundred men were next morning at work, to construct a temporary road across the mountain, part of a very old one having been discovered through the Chesnut Forest, composed of great masses of stone, which were soon rooted up and broken; a wooden bridge was thrown over a ravine, and the inequalities of the pass so smoothed down, that the fourth day a

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travelling carriage was supported over it ; in fact, in one week the road was quite passable for the frightened fair ones, who left the valley at their leisure, without fording, or swimming, or scaling, or any effort more marvellous than going up and down a steep hill.

This path was the only exit for eleven months, while the mountain was cutting down and an embankment of masonry building. It is a remarkable circumstance, that the very day the new road was opened for carriages, the 30th of August, came the second inundation ; the swelling of the little stream through the ravine before alluded to, swept away the temporary bridge, and enough of the old road to render it quite impassable, and we were very near being made prisoners again ! The poor people said " The floods were a judgment from heaven !—they had never experienced such calamities till gambling had been licensed at the baths."

" I remember reading in a book of the middle ages, that the noble old chesnuts, which so beautifully clothe the surrounding mountains, were originally brought from Spain, and planted here by a philanthropist, whose name has escaped my memory. The tree, however, existed in other parts of Italy in the time of the Ro-

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mans. Virgil thus alludes to them in his 2nd Eclogue :—

> Myself will search our planted grounds at home,
> For downy peaches and the glossy plum :
> And thrash the chesnuts in the neighbouring grove,
> Such as my Amaryllis used to love.

In the fourteenth century, Vaulo Guinigi, of Lucca, gave premiums to the people for extending and planting them wherever a tree could grow. Each family possesses or purchases what they call a patch of forest ;* the price is estimated according to the average quantity of chesnuts annually produced. The fruit is gathered in October and November, immediately smoke-dried on mats made of cane, with a fire beneath—shelled by being beaten in sacks—ground in a mill to a fine flour, which, wet with water, and stirred to a paste, is spread on round hot stones, between dried chesnut leaves, and a cake is produced resembling our crumpet or Scottish scone, and called necci, or netchy, according to our pronunciation. This substantial food costs a third less and often only half the price of wheaten flour,† and goes farther in sustaining the hungry

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* "Un pezzo di Selva."

† The chestnut harvest was so abundant last year that the flour sold for one soldo the pound of twelve ounces, which quantity is suf-

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peasantry ; but too much rain, or too little, or the least frost, ruins their harvest. The poorer classes are permitted to glean after a certain day, and all chesnuts that fall on the high road are public property. I once asked an old man, past eighty, with seven in famliy, if he had gathered enough ? " Yes," he said, " sufficient to sustain us till Christmas, after that God will provide ;" and such is the general spirit of faith and resignation amongst these poor people, whom we find always grateful and contented.

In the winter the villagers amuse themselves with an athletic game called *La Forma*, played with cheese, wound round with a broad tape, and thrown forwards along the ground ; he whose cheese rolls the farthest wins, and the cheese is the prize ; it is made of sheep's milk, and costs a paul the pound ; the flavour is improved by rolling, and above ten thousand pounds of cheese are, I am assured, played away in this manner every winter. Some grotesque ceremonies attend the closing of the playing season, which is supposed to end with the carnival, but often

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ficient to sustain a labouring man a whole day. A Lucchese soldo is the 15th part of a paul, which latter is about five pence halfpenny of our currency.

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steals on through half the Lent. A large wooden key, which is whimsically intended to indicate locking up the game, is consigned, with the sling, the leather wrist-band, &c., to the custody of him who lost the last game, which is always prolonged to the latest ray of the setting sun. The wight who had the charge of these matters the year before, is then obliged to stand under a balcony, with lights stuck around him, and a white cloth thrown over his head, to give him the air of a high priest, and there to make a solemn exhortation to the new custodee, enjoining scrupulous care of the important objects which he places in his hands. Libations, cheers, and *vivas* follow, and the farce ends with chairing the new curator round the village. The athletic are in too much haste to recommence their sports the following December to wait for opening ceremonies.

The villagers have also a theatre, and perform amateur plays during the carnival. Their dramas are generally historical, and always moral and well selected; females* take no part in them.

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* I regret to say, that this good rule was broken in upon while we were last at Florence. The prevalence of long beards amongst the young *bourgoise* had not left one with a smooth chin to take the female parts, and four of the prettiest girls of the valley were persuaded to undertake them. I rejoice, however, to find that learning

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In answer to my objections against games and the theatre in general, I am assured that in this little community the people are improved physically by the one and morally by the other, and that they would fall into inactivity of body and mind during the winter if such pursuits were prohibited; they have little opportunity of reading, and a moral drama has its influence in refining while it amuses. I could say no more, for there is not an instance of inebriety, a quarrel, and scarcely an immorality on record throughout the valley. Much native talent is evinced in their acting; the village apothecary, a handsome youth, is the Roscius.

There is certainly a very fine grain in this people—they make, proverbially, the best servants in Italy. The Comune have an excellent school of mutual instruction for boys, to which we are invited every year to assist in giving the premiums. They are always well selected story-

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the dialogue, drilling, and preparing their costume, proved so irksome and troublesome that they are quite disinclined to appear again, though they are said to have acquitted themselves modestly, and with sufficient spirit. Happily, the new Commissarie, and Gonfaloniere, a young advocate of Lucca, who is a man of considerable talent, information, and good feeling, is quite against such an exhibition, on moral principles. Signor Vannine is an immense acquisition to the baths, and will do honor to his appointment.

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books, and accompanied by a receipt from the savings' bank, for a trifle in money, lodged there in the name of the diligent boy, who is naturally emulous to augment his little store by further deposits. Our own contribution is not merely confined to those who have gained prizes. We carry with us a large basket of buccellate, a cake for which Lucca is renowned, in the form of a ring, in order that the little fellows may each have a bracelet to carry home on his arm.

The commissario accompanies each premium with a few encouraging words of approbation, and concludes by recounting to them a moral tale; the last was the history of a diligent boy, contrasted with that of an idle one, ending in the prosperity and happiness of the one—the misery and execution of the other. It is impossible to have an idea, without witnessing it, of the effect which a story, particularly if it be accompanied by a print or drawing, produces on young hearers in this land of the imagination. I remember at an infant school, at Florence, being permitted by the directress to hold up a coloured illustration as soon as the tale was finished; the little creatures nearly devoured me—my hands were kissed again and again (a

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usual mode of expressing gratitude in Italy), and the drawing almost worshiped.

The clergy around us are well intentioned men ; they expound the Scriptures to the utmost of their knowledge every Sunday morning, and teach the *dottrina*, or catechism, after vespers. Their flocks bear testimony of their pastoral care—few vestiges of superstition are apparent throughout the valley, and no where in Italy is there so little to give us pain. The poor people, generally, refer to the Saviour, which is the true source of their purity and better morals.

The valley has had recently to lament the loss of an excellent rector, Signor Olivieri. He was anxious to promote education, and often asked Colonel Stisted to interest the sovereign in the establishment of infant schools, which we are living in the hope of seeing introduced here, as they have been in Tuscany and throughout Lombardy. We used to lend him the works and reports of the Abbates Aposti and Lambruschini, and of Count Guicciardini, those excellent Christians and patriots, who are devoted to the moral culture of the poor, and who have the true interests of their country so much at heart. At last, the worthy pastor began to think it was his duty to do something for us in return. He came

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one day with a book in his hand; said we had often contributed to his edification, and he wished to reciprocate the kindness. The work, as I anticipated, was controversial, and intended to shake our principles. I saw at once the necessity of being explicit, and in order to avoid being drawn into a discussion, I prepared a note to have ready when he called again, warmly expressing our grateful sense of his solicitude for our spiritual welfare, and telling him, that I had looked over his book, that I could say much in reply, but I made a law for myself, when we first entered Italy, never to engage in controversy with any one—neither to interfere, or be interfered with—but that there was a neutral ground where I was willing to meet him—a subject which I was ever ready to discuss—and that was the love of Christ—of Him, in whom we both trusted, and to whose Church we equally professed to belong. The worthy man's heart was touched—his eye glistened—when he could speak, he said, "it is well;" controversy was never recurred to; he carried home Dr. Nott's beautiful translation of our Liturgy to read, after looking over a new purchase of moral story-books I had just added to our lending collection. They only awaited his approbation to be circulated, and he always

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gave it freely, knowing that he might trust us.

There is generally a boy or girl in every family who can read for the other members. Many improving works for youth are now printed at Milan and Florence, particularly "La Guida del Educatore," by the excellent Abbate Lambruschini, a man of sincere piety and deep erudition. This work is published monthly, and costs only eighteen pauls a year. If you are curious to know how education advances in Italy, you may have it in London, at Molini's, in King William-street. The part for children is amusing, and full of useful information; it is pure Tuscan, and excellent reading for young students in the Italian language.

Our excellent Italian master, Signor Tolomei, who was recently left a property by an uncle, has just been telling me a delightful trait of Lucchese good faith. His relative had lands, and dealt largely in cattle throughout the mountains.—Being a monied man, he was in the habit of making loans to the poor farmers to help them on in the world. His nephew was aware of the fact, but not of the sums in any one instance, and no document, or even a memorandum was to be found. Tolomei had no resource but to trust to

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their honour. When the pay-day came, not to appear quite ignorant, he said to each as they arrived, "You owed my late uncle ten scudi." "Ten! Signor, it was fifteen he generously lent me." To the next, "You, I think, borrowed twenty scudi." "Oh! it was thirty; and here they are." Need I say more for the good faith of our poor neighbours. Signor Tolomei is the man to appreciate such a trait. He is an excellent scholar and language-master, highly literary, and heartily devoted to the English. He never has time to give us in summer, but in winter we profit considerably by his society and lively agreeable conversation.

Somebody has called retirement in the country *par excellence*, "the regimen of the soul," and, in a moral country like this favoured spot, it proves highly so; but there is still one deficiency—we have no regular English chapel, and no permanent chaplain. I rejoice to say, however, that our hopes are now high of possessing both. The Lucchese government is well disposed to grant the required permission; the liberality of our com-patriots will, I trust, do the rest.

NOTE.—This correspondence was commenced in the year 1839.

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LETTER II.

Villa Brodrick, Bagni di Lucca.

The distance from these baths to the city of Lucca is fifteen miles; the road follows the windings of the Serchio, and every turn produces some new and beautiful combination of mountain scenery, surmounted by the higher Apennines, whose summits are covered with snow seven months in the year. Several of the lower range are crowned with little towns, remnants of the civil wars; they were formerly walled, and have still sufficient vestiges of the olden time to be highly picturesque. This fine level road was made by the Princess Elisa Baciocchi, Napoleon's sister, who reigned at Lucca nine years, and greatly improved the state, by stirring it into activity, after the French had appropriated the wealth of the republic, and drained its resources. To this spirited woman the baths are indebted

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for being opened to the world. Before her time these hot springs were scarcely accessible to a carriage; and a whole day was required to come here from Lucca by the mountain path. The princess metamorphosed an old villa into the commodious palace you see in the sketch I inclose. She had several baths erected, and made the place attractive to strangers, by inducing her mother and family to frequent it. She maintained a brilliant court at Lucca, gave *fêtes*, and obliged the old republicans to lay aside their sumptuary laws, and dress gaily, to do her honour—infusing a chivalric spirit around her.

After the strict decorum of their former laws and lives, this reign was a Saturnalia; nevertheless, she did much essential good, by reviving the ancient manufactures, and establishing institutes for education.

The princess made a journey to Paris, expressly to prevail on the emperor to repeal his order for suppressing the convents, and to conjure him to exempt the state from conscription. "Save me the pain," she said, "of hearing my good Lucchese housewives lament that they are mothers." Napoleon declared, "it would be showing too much partiality to grant both these indulgences;" but he permitted his sister to

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choose which she preferred, and the princess at once decided for exemption from conscription, adding, in the words of the old Italian proverb, "better a hundred wounds than one death;" meaning, I suppose, that the monks and nuns would recover their dispersion.

The Princess Baciocchi is well and gratefully remembered here, and many traits of her affability are on record, even to rustic frolics. Hearing some peasant girls singing in a field, she ran out one day in the sun to listen to them; and having in vain called for her hat from the door, she threw a handkerchief over her head, and thus disguised, joined the merry reapers. She found them roasting little bundles of wheat over a fire of sticks. They did not fail to offer her a share, with the usual "Ci vuol favorire, Signora;" to which the princess freely assented, partaking of their parched corn, and joining in their songs. She then asked them, if they were not afraid of disturbing "la Principessa," whose windows overlooked them? "Oh no," answered they, "we saw Her Highness in the balcony the other day, and by her gestures we are sure she enjoyed hearing us, and would even join in our song, if she could." At this moment a chamberlain coming up, with his hat off, discovered to whom

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they were chattering so freely. The poor reapers, in a fright, fell on their knees, and asked pardon for their familiarity. They were not only forgiven, but rewarded with money and kind words for having amused her.

Rustic games were established on every *fête*-day during the season, to please the lower orders, and likewise, doubtless, to amuse the court, and dispel their *ennui*.

A pavilion was raised for the royal party a mile from hence, under the chesnut-trees, on the road to Lucca, with stands on either side for visitors, to witness the races and gambols of the peasantry. An arch was erected near the church, and another at the goal. The little farm-house, with a terrace opposite, was decorated with boughs for the band. The *fêtes* commenced with men running in sacks, and women with vases of water on their heads. She who arrived at the goal, with the vase still in its place, won, even should she be drenched through with its contents, which generally happened. Then came wrestling, and other athletic games amongst the peasants. Afterwards, a sheet was held by four men, on which lay a child, whom they threw into the air, in order that he might catch a garland of flowers, attached to a cord, between two trees,

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which grew opposite the royal pavilion. This game belonged to three companies, who each had a different coloured sheet—red, blue, and yellow. The children were also dressed in party colours, with little wings. The garland was attached by a fine thread, so that the least touch of their tiny fingers would bring it down.

A rope was also drawn across the road, on which was strung a number of earthen *pentole*, or pipkins: some were full of water, others were empty, others contained prizes. Those who liked to try their fortune were blindfolded; they struck the vases with long canes, and received the contents in their faces.

There was also a pole, bearing a banner. Long ropes were attached to the top, well soaped. He who brought down the standard, gained the prize. Then came horse-racing; and finally, two hundred barbonacci (a small coin of nine soldi, worth about three pence of our money), were well mixed up in a large cauldron of stiff *polenta*, or porridge, made of chesnut flour. This was divided amongst the people; and the fun was to see them burn their fingers, in their eagerness to try what fortune had sent them. The prizes were from ten to fifteen scudi each. It is to be lamented, that a spirit of gambling,

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which needs no encouragement in Italy, was inevitably awakened by these games. Diversion for the idle courtiers was the object, I fear, rather than the benefit of the people.

One summer that there seemed to be a lack of excitement, a young French chamberlain, on the plea of amusing the princess, applied to the private theatricals of the village, to perform a play in her Highness's presence. The worthy Dilettante excused themselves, that they had nothing ready which would be worthy of their royal governante. But the Frenchman, eager for something new, inquired what they had last performed, and hearing it was "Harlequin, king of Thebes," he gave a hasty glance at the comedy, and said "it would do." The day was accordingly fixed, and the court attended. When the curtain drew up, the scene presented a rustic youth, just proclaimed king, in consequence of some peculiar marks found about him, which had been previously announced by the oracle, to indicate the person whom the Thebans should select. The ministry, perceiving that his majesty was sadly deficient in education, bring a French master, who tries to teach him politeness; but Harlequin travesties all the phrases taught him, which makes mirth for the audience. He evinces

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no taste but for eating—is anxious to know the dinner-hour—and when he hears the banquet will be served when the clock strikes twelve, he orders that the clock may strike twelve every hour in the day. The princess listened to all this nonsense, and laughed like the rest. At length his majesty is asked, how he happened to become king, to which he replies, with the strong coarse language of a clown, "Non so raccapezzarmi neppur 'io come son venuto al Trogolo. Coloro che mi trovavono un bel mattino a pie della rupe pretescio rinvenire in me che avessi addosso un grand odore di re, e mi condussero alla corte, ma io so di esser figlio di un mascalzone di campagna," which may be freely translated thus—"I am sure I don't know myself how I got on the throne. Them there, what found me one fine morning at the foot of the rock, pretended to see on me some signs and tokens of a real king, and so brought me to court; but, I know myself, that I am the son of a clod-pole, and no more." On hearing these words, the princess arose, exclaiming, "Basta, basta!—enough, enough;" and left the theatre in haste. The curtain dropped, and the police cleared the house. She was, however, soon persuaded that nothing personal was intended, and that it was

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mere chance their having acted that play, and only because there was no other ready. It is a pity she had not more presence of mind and self-command. No person would have thought of applying so foolish a plot to her, if she had possessed tact enough to sit still, and not betray herself.

Of Prince Baciocchi I can hear little. His consort was ruler of Lucca; she managed the state in his name, and left him full leisure to amuse himself. Music was his passion; he had Paganini for a master. One day the great violinist arrived late: he saw the prince at the window, looking out for him impatiently. In his haste to get out of the carriage, he fell right into the gutter, and arose covered with mud. He looked up at the royal pupil, showing his predicament, but the prince cried out, "Che importa, viene anche cosi!—No matter, come as you are;" and poor Paganini was obliged to fiddle, bespattered from head to foot.

Prince Baciocchi was a Corsican; and his name Pasquale, which is one of the thirty Italian synonims for fool: the princess changed it to Felice, or happy, and tried to moderate his love of eating, which called forth from the poor man the only play upon words of which he was pro-

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bably ever guilty:—"Quando ero Pasquale allora era Felice, ma ora che son Felice, divengo ogni giorno piu Pasquale"—When I was Pasquale I was Felice, or happy, but now I am Felice, I am become Pasquale, or made a fool of. Which some malcontents amongst his subjects travestied into—"When thou wert Pasquale, we were Felice, but now thou art Felice, we are Pasquale."

The royal governess, nevertheless, deserved well of the Lucchese; and was so partial to Lucca, that she continued to reside amongst them, and to show them the utmost favour, even when the emperor extended her dominions to Tuscany in 1809. At length Napoleon fell. Elisa vainly hoped to retain Lucca and Piombino, her sovereignty of these states having been acknowledged by Austria at the treaty of Presburg. When the English force landed at Leghorn, she sent the Marchese Lucchesini, an accomplished nobleman, and one of the greatest ornaments of her court, to Lord William Bentinck, to propitiate his interest in her favour, and obtain her permission to remain. The English general, who probably only saw her in the light of a usurper, gruffly replied, "Tell that woman, if she does not fly, I must take

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her."* She called her court and senate together, told them the necessity for departure, recommended moderation and submission; and after imploring her ladies with tears, to use their ascendancy over the other sex, that her institutions might be maintained for the general good, she took leave of them, with great emotion on all sides, and escaped unmolested to Genoa. Her reign is generally alluded to in grateful terms by all ranks.

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* Mazzarosa, Storia di Lucca—Tom. ii. p. 284.

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LETTER III.

Villa Brodrick, Bagni di Lucca,
March 25th.

The spring is opening beautifully this year. It is generally the most trying season to health in Italy, but here we are less sensible of its vicissitudes, because, in this narrow valley, we are much sheltered from the north-east winds. Our shrubbery has a screen of fine laurels and bay-trees. There is much in Pliny's description of his Tuscan villa, under the Apennines, which well describes the climate and vegetation of this vale; but the cold is never too severe for our evergreens, and the myrtle which, he says, would not flourish around him, flowers here luxuriantly every year: also the tulip-tree, and many beautiful shrubs. We have even now two magnolias just coming out, covered with large purple flowers—one of them bears to the number of

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two hundred! The plane also flourishes around us, and grows so fast, that we have been obliged to cut down several to give free circulation of air to the evergreens. Pliny speaks of these trees being covered with ivy, while their heads flourish with their own verdure. With us the parasite defends the tree, it preys upon, from the axe, and clothes it luxuriantly in winter. It is too beautiful to be destroyed. The ivy mantle has just saved a great chesnut on the lawn, which is now like an aviary, and full of blackbirds.

I never believed the raptures of the poets about the nightingale, until I heard the feathered songsters of our shrubbery. There is something seraphic in their song, and a juiciness of tone, which quite captivates the senses. The effect at midnight is marvellous and "most musical." I can scarcely say "most melancholy," for I am too much enchanted to be any thing but happy, when "Philomel's seraphic song, the silence breaks of stilly night." These vocalists regale us by day also; and we have just discovered a nest in the Hydrangias, which form an iris around our front lawn. There is much variety in their tone. One now near us is sending forth a harsh croak, which is, I believe, the voice of warning from the male bird, indicating that the brood is hatched,

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and that the cares of paternity have fallen upon him. Caution and vigilance engross him; and we have lost the sweet serenade he carolled to his love on her nest, to beguile the tedium of incubation.

I was surprised to find a nightingale in a cage when we lately went to see the duchess, and to hear that it sings constantly: it must have been from the nest, and they are most difficult to rear. The appearance of the bird that "shuns the noise of folly," is disappointing; it possesses neither grace of form or beauty of plumage, is less in size, and no prettier than a sparrow. Thus are the gifts of the Creator equally portioned out to his creatures.

We are afraid to let our dear mother winter here, lest there should be damp, though we feel it not. The bracing air of Florence, so baneful to us, because exciting, agrees with her well. She is now there. She likes the Etruscan Athens, "girt by its theatre of hills," and is surrounded with old friends, who love and appreciate her; but I lament her absence from us, when the charms of spring are coming forth, for she enjoys gardening, and every active, as well as intellectual, occupation.

My mother is highly pleased at your having

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stimulated me to describe our life abroad. She has long been urging me to turn an idle pen to some profit, and complaining, that I am unworthy of our literary ancestors. I have delighted her by the assurance, that I am going to write you every remarkable incident of Lucca's history, before her return.

You knew my matchless mother in the meridian of life. You can scarcely imagine how her noble qualities shine forth in age, and how the dignity and beauty which distinguished her early days, now adorn the aged Christian. She is like a fine Vandyke, in the sable garb of widowhood, which she has lightened, but never laid aside. Some of our friends call her the evening star! There is much beauty and applicability in the name, but to me it is associated with sadness. She was in her seventieth year when she travelled post from England to join us in 1834, accompanied by a valuable young friend, who has been like a second daughter to her for many years. Her fine mind has lost none of its energy, and no young person ever came abroad more anxious for intellectual improvement, or more determined to travel with advantage. She had known Italian in youth, at a period when it was a rare accomplishment; but she had forgotten nearly all. She

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now studies grammar, and writes exercises for our good master Tolomei, with all the patience and assiduity of a docile child. She had a drawing master also at Florence, and even goes out sketching. When we travel, her indefatigable ardour shames us. She is always the youngest of the party—the first ready, and the easiest accommodated. At Rome she explored every ruin; thrice descended into the catacombs, and twice ascended to the ball of St. Peter's. She has her own horses, and takes long excursions, always bringing home a fresh supply of health and spirits. She keeps a journal, and a *hortus siccus*—collects antiquities—is forming an album of foreign views and costumes—and has a collection of beetles and butterflies of her own catching on the surrounding hills. At home she used to pursue a career of usefulness amongst schools and prisons. She was more particularly occupied by a *Shelter*, instituted as a refuge for delinquent females, after their time of imprisonment had expired. She had taken an active part in its establishment, in consequence of two unfortunate women leaving the Bridewell, having drowned themselves rather than go forth to the world friendless and dishonoured, or return to their old paths of vice. Abroad she finds various ways

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of doing good; she assists me to prescribe for the indigent sick, and has a levee of poor people almost every morning. She has already acquired much repute amongst them: they say, she possesses the balsam of the Madonna, which is esteemed a cure for every woe.

Extraordinary presence of mind, and a degree of courage beyond her sex, has been amongst our dear mother's peculiar gifts. Various incidents are recorded in our memories, exemplifying these qualities. I remember in my childhood, an old friend being obliged to start unexpectedly on a night journey, and having no powder ready to load his pistols, he sent in haste to our house for some; my mother soon found a considerable quantity, which had been carelessly left in a large sheet of brown paper by a young sportsman. In her haste to carry it to the traveller, who was waiting in a carriage at the door, she would not delay to fold in the ends, but gathering it up in her hand like a handkerchief, she hurried to the hall, and found the door had closed of itself, while the servants were standing outside. To open it, she was obliged to put the wax-taper she carried into the left hand with the powder; in the effort the brown paper caught fire, and blazed up higher than her head. A timid woman would

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have thrown it from her, and probably blown up the house; but my mother was born to be a heroine: she held it the tighter, and compressing the flame with the right hand, she twisted the burning paper between her fingers, and extinguished it completely; she then filled the traveller's powder-horn at the door, and returned to her family full of thankfulness for their escape, with her beautiful hands fearfully burned. I well remember how patiently she bore the pain for days.

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LETTER IV.

Villa Brodrick, Bagni di Lucca.

In order to make you and my young friends thoroughly acquainted with the mountain region we have chosen for our foreign home, and to awaken your interest in its legends, traditions, and localities, I shall try to give you an abridged sketch of Lucca's history, which will serve as a chain to unite the biographies of many remarkable personages who flourished here in the middle ages. When well acquainted with them, your young readers will not fail to seek out their contemporaries, friends and foes, in the parallel histories of the surrounding states.

Lucca is an acknowledged Etruscan city, though not one of the confederate twelve. It became a prey to its northern neighbours, the

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Ligurians, in the second century of Rome, and a Roman municipality in the sixth, when garrisoned by Sempronius Longus, on his return from his second attempt against Hannibal, near Piacenza.

It cannot fail to interest you, to be reminded, that Julius Cæsar was pro-consul of Lucca, and formed here, with Pompey and Crassus, the first triumvirate! Lucca then extended beyond the Appenines, and flourished during the empire. Her power declined in the fifth century, when Italy was overrun by the hoards of the north, but revived again under the good Goth, Theodoric, who, without compromising his authority, allowed the Italian states to enjoy the liberties and laws they had inherited from the Romans. After the death of this just and valorous prince, Justinian sent Belisarius, and afterwards his rival Narses, to overthrow the dominion of the Ostrogoths in Italy; Lucca gallantly sustained a siege of three months before she submitted to the sway of the Greek emperor.

The Longobards, who next subjugated Italy, made Lucca the capital of Tuscany, and elected the first Lucchese dukes, who reigned in succession from that period, submitting to the French yoke under Charlemagne, and the German power, which dominated in Italy for centuries

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after. One of these dukes, Adalbert the rich, is mentioned by Muratori and Gibbon, as living like an ancient patriarch, with flocks and herds, in the tenth century. From him sprang the royal family of England, through the princes of Este! His tomb is in the cathedral at Lucca. Countess Matilda, one of the most remarkable heroines of the middle ages, was also of this line. She was born at Lucca in 1046. It is related, that when her father, Duke Bonifazio, married Beatrice, Princess of Lorraine, he went to seek his bride, and conducted her home with a sumptuous suite, whose horses were shod with silver, the nails unturned. According to the custom of the time, he kept open court for three months after his marriage, where, not only nobles were entertained, but mountebanks, jugglers, and mimics, were welcome, because low buffoonery was the soul of these festivities. Pignotti, quoting an ancient historian, says, "The tables were spread with gold and silver; the viands were so substantial, that mules were used to transport them to the board; and spices (so much in use at this period) were ground in mills; there were also fountains of generous wine, with silver buckets, that all might drink freely." In further testimony of the magnificence of Bonifazio, an old

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COUNTESS MATILDA.

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DUKE BONAFAZIO

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chronicler relates, that when the Emperor, Henry the Third, was in Italy, he penetrated the frank and liberal character, and sought the friendship of the duke. Wishing to prove him, he, on one occasion, expressed his predilection for viands cooked in vinegar, and exaggerated the difficulty of finding it of a fine flavour and in abundance. The hint was sufficient for the munificent Bonifazio, who took measures at once to satisfy the emperor, and gratify his own liberal spirit by ennobling a gift of so little value. He immediately ordered a car to be constructed of massive silver, with vases to contain the liquor, wheels, axletrees, and even the oxen which were to appear to draw it, all of the same metal, and of the natural size. To this rich gift, cattle were attached to convey it from Canossa to Piacenza, where the emperor held his temporary court. The present was highly pleasing to Henry, but it was like the taste of blood to the tiger; from that moment he determined the destruction of the too generous Bonifazio, in order to seize upon his wealth. Fearing his power and popularity in Italy, he first essayed with offers of high appointments at the imperial court, to draw him into Germany. Failing to tempt him, he then formed a stratagem for his arrest, and summoning Boni-

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fazio suddenly, on the plea of consulting him on an important question, he ordered him to be shown into a remote cabinet of the palace, leaving his suite at a distance. But the duke was astute as he was noble and liberal. An unguarded expression of the empress had raised his suspicion. He took care that his attendants should wear concealed arms, and warned them to vigilance. Being refused entrance by the royal guard, his suite would not be held back, and forced their way after their prince into the emperor's presence. Thus taken by surprise, Henry was obliged to dissemble, and receive them with a good grace. Bonifazio excused the intrusion of his followers, by saying, "that the reluctance of the imperial guard to let them pass, had convinced him that they meditated some treason against their emperor, and that his majesty had sent for him, expressly requiring his protection." Other stratagems followed, which were as cleverly frustrated: they only ceased when Henry was obliged to return to Germany to put down a rebellion, and the noble Bonifazio was spared, until his life fell a sacrifice to private animosity in 1052, just as he was preparing to expiate a charge against him for simony, by a long pilgrimage. He left

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his celebrated daughter, only six years old, to the guardianship of Beatrice, whom he appointed regent.

Matilda is recorded to have taken the field with her mother at the age of fifteen, when she took part in the battle, in which Cadolo, the anti-pope, was defeated. She was affianced to Gotifredo, the humpback, Duke of Lorraine, and, by the death of her only surviving parent, was soon left sole heiress of a vast territory. Her possessions were—Lucca, Tuscany, Modena, Reggio, Mantua, Ferrara, and afterwards Parma and Piacenza. Her hunchback, whom she never permitted to approach her, was assassinated, three years after their marriage, by a personal enemy.

Countess Matilda was devoted to the holy see, then at war with the emperors of Germany: and the sole object of her existence seemed to be, to sustain and aggrandize her contemporary popes. She fought their battles during her life, and early made a deed, assigning the whole of her territory to the church, whence arose the claims of the pontiffs to Lombardy, which became new matter of dissension.

In 1077, this heroine received Gregory the Seventh in her impregnable fortress of Canossa, near Reggio, where, at her persuasion, he re-

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voked the excommunication thundered against the Emperor, Henry the Fourth, who there submitted to do penance before him; but that sovereign having again taken up arms, the courageous countess opposed him, in defence of the papal cause.

Still tenacious of her liberty, and disinclined to matrimony, she refused her hand to Robert, Duke of Normandy, son to William the Conqueror; but, thirteen years after she had been relieved of her first matrimonial connection, she was persuaded by Pope Urban the Second, to espouse Guelph, Duke of Bavaria. She consented, solely from political motives, to this union, and always kept him personally at a distance, as she had done her first husband. This marriage, as the pope intended, proved inimical to the emperor's interest. He immediately sent an army to humble and punish Matilda, who, after repeated defeats, was advised by her Diet, composed of nobles and ecclesiastics, to make terms; but being promised by a fanatic monk the assistance of heaven, she refused to treat with one who was again under the ban of excommunication, and soon redeemed her losses. She revenged herself on Henry, by exciting his son Conrad to rebellion, and assisting

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to place the crown of Italy on his head: nor did the artful Matilda stop here—resolved to wound the emperor to the heart, she contrived, by a stratagem, to liberate his consort Adelaide from prison at Verona; and, after giving her a splendid reception, persuaded her to present herself before the pope's council at Viacenza, where two hundred bishops and thirty thousand of the laity were assembled, and there to expose her wrongs, which she shamelessly exaggerated before the pontiff.*

Deeming Henry's power no longer formidable, Matilda began to think her nominal husband a burthen, and ceased to conceal from him the fact of having settled the whole of her possessions on the See of Rome. This discovery, and his assurance of her total indifference, drove him to seek a divorce, and to join the Emperor's party. Matilda's antipathy to conjugal ties was proverbial, though her enemies accuse her of a flirtation with Gregory VII., but it is generally believed the love of power was her dominant passion, a most unlovely disposition, we must admit, notwithstanding the *exposé* in Dryden's "Young

* "Biographie Universelle."

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Knight's Tale," that *sovereignty* is precisely what woman loves best. None of the Countess's panegyrists ever hint that she was handsome, which silence may be considered decisive when a lady is in the case.

We hear of this amazon standing her ground in every danger, and surviving all her contemporaries. Henry IV. and Gregory had become the mutual victims of their mutual hatred; the Emperor was dethroned by his younger son—the Pope died in exile, after witnessing the sack of Rome; still we see the young Emperor traversing Italy with the sword of desolation without molesting Matilda, and, on his return, making her a visit of curiosity in her fortress, near Reggio, where she entertained him for three days with regal pomp; and, conversing with him in the German language, so much won his good graces, that he confirmed her in all her possessions, called her his mother, and made her his Vice-Queen in Lombardy. The revolution of Mantua was Matilda's last achievement; she died near Reggio, in 1115, aged 69.

Since writing the above, we have found an old chronicle* which details the death of Countess

* "Francesco Mana Memorie di Matilda La Grand, Contessa d' Italia.—1642.

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Matilda, as having taken place at Rome, and gives an account of her erecting, in great haste, and endowing the Church of St. James, on whose *fête* she said she was to die. The building was so near the chamber where she lay, that she could hear the celebration of mass from her bed. She was afflicted with gout, and forbidden by the bishops to fast, or indulge in any carnal mortification during Lent. She died as she predicted, on the vigil of the Saint, July 24th, after seven months of suffering.

This biographer is much more partial than others I have consulted. Countess Matilda's adherence to the Pope exalts her in his eyes to the privilege of doing no wrong, and the hapless Emperor, in the same principle, is aspersed as altogether unworthy, and incapable of doing right.

The Castle of Canossa is still in existence. Dante meets Matilda in purgatory, gathering flowers and singing, but his apostrophe to her—

"Deh, bella donna, ch' ai, raggi d' amore
Ti scaldi."*

* "Lady beautiful!
Thou, who (if looks, that use to speak the heart
Are worthy of our trust), with love's own beam
Dost warm thee."

Cary's Translation—Pur. Canto. 28.

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seems so little appropriate to the war-making, husband-hating Countess, that we are persuaded to believe with some commentators, the poet to have allegorically personified the lady's better-self only, and the love she bore her church, which all should emulate.

There is a poem extant, composed by an ecclesiastic, in the fervor of his enthusiasm, for the great patron of the church, relating her marvellous feats and those of her august progenitors. It is dedicated to Matilda, and the devoted author would fain have presented it, but her death disappointed his hopes. The manuscript is adorned with miniatures, on vellum, of the Countess and Duke Bonifazio ; I send you outlines of them as curious specimens of the costume of the day, and I shall tell you the colours, that Laura's pencil may fill up the portraits.

To begin with the *extinguisher* with which the great lady is crowned, it is of gold, studded with jewels round the brow, beneath she wears a rose-coloured veil, and a ruby mantle, with a broad gold border enriched with precious stones ; the dress is sky-blue, the falling sleeves trimmed in the same manner as the cloak ; a golden fillet encircles the neck, and the under sleeves are ruby. The mantle is tied with a red ribbon on

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the left shoulder (those of the men always fasten on the right). The august personage is seated on a green cushion, embroidered with flowers, and covered with a gold net-work; the foot-stool is of the same colour; the seat is crimson, supported on carved pilasters, painted green, with dark blue capitals; the back of the throne is of velvet; the wood-work appears to be of ebony, inlaid with scrolls in all the colours of the rain-bow.

The munificent Duke wears an egg-shaped cap of gold, with a great jewel in the centre, and filleted with precious stones, on a red ground. The mantle is green, with red spots, and trimmed with a broad stripe of gold, studded with jewels; the lining is of a lighter green. The tunic is bright blue, ornamented in the same manner, with rich bracelets. Fancy his costume completed with red stockings and broad gold garters, and Duke Bonifazio sits before you; but do not forget his shoes, for they are cloth of gold.

We cannot compliment the taste of the day in the arrangement of colours. These old miniatures, though, generally, beautifully painted, often shock the eye with discordant hues; blues, and greens, and yellows, thrown together without mercy, and in despite of all the rules of colouring.

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LETTER V.

Villa Brodrick.

Lucca has also its hero—its Napoleon of the middle ages! Castruccio Castracani degli Antelminelli, whose life abounds with marvellous exploits, extraordinary adventure and achievements, which in a wide sphere, and at another period, might have mastered half the world. Castruccio entered life when all Italy was torn by the dissensions of the Guelphs and Ghibelines, and his career was an epitome of the times.

Stimulated by something little short of *amor patriæ* for Lucca, I have been at some pains to collect every existing document respecting its hero, in order to send you a sketch of him; and I have taken up my pen with no less than four ancient biographies, and three accredited

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historians open before me, nevertheless I am already at a stand, for none of these worthy authors agree as to when Castruccio was born, or if his father, Geri, were a cavalier, commanding forts and castles, or, like most of the nobles, a merchant; one thing only is certain, that the boy came into this breathing world about 1280; that he imbibed hatred of the Guelphs from his cradle, and might have been supposed, like another Hannibal, to have sealed his animosity with a solemn oath for their destruction, for his whole soul in after life was devoted to that object only. When yet a child, the persecutions of their enemies obliged him to fly with his family from Lucca, and to take refuge at Ancona, where they had a relative in trade, and where a bad climate and accumulated misfortunes soon cut short the existence of both his parents, leaving Castruccio, their only offspring, an orphan of nine years old. Of his boyhood and education we hear nothing, nor does he again appear, till we find him in England, in his twentieth year, seeking a relative, who was also engaged in commerce, but whose pursuits and reception proved so little congenial to the young adventurer, that he boldly made his way to court, won King Edward's favour by his noble bearing and

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various accomplishments, and became the monarch's companion in all manly exercise, and in many of the warlike enterprizes of his reign. It is to be regretted, that more particulars of Castruccio's sojourn in England have not been preserved. We only know, that being struck by a young courtier, with whom he was playing at tennis, in the king's presence, he dealt the insulter a death blow, and was only permitted time to escape, through Edward's favour, "leaving his relative, Alderigo, in the utmost peril," says the old chronicler, "because by the iniquitous laws of England, every inmate of the house of a foreigner who killed a native, was condemned to pay the penalty with loss of life and property. Without waiting to discuss the truth of this allegation against the laws of the Plantaganets, we must follow Castruccio into Flanders, where war was then raging. Finding many English fighting for the Flemings, he deemed it for his interest to escape to France in the disguise of a merchant, and fought there for Philip-le-bel, Edward's sworn enemy, acquiring a high reputation for prowess and military achievements, "and proving himself," says his oldest biographer, "to be wise in council and valiant in the field."

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It is also on record, that he fought in Lombardy, and from thence returned to Italy, and joined the Lucchese exiles at Pisa, where alone* the love of liberty was truly united with the principles of the Ghibeline party. Not long before his arrival, the Pisans had to deplore the death of the Emperor, Henry the Seventh, who was supposed to have been poisoned when taking the sacrament at Buonconvento from a Dominican monk, bribed to the foul deed by the Florentine Guelphs. The Lucchese triumphed at this event with eight days rejoicing. The Pisans mourned, and three thousand, dressed in black, went forth to meet the emperor's remains. In their humiliation they made overtures of peace to Lucca; but the successful are seldom ready to accommodate. The Lucchese refused to yield up Asciano, a Pisan castle near the city, where they had already in mockery set up looking-glasses on its highest tower, that when the sun shone, their enemies might see with shame how near were their conquerors; and their envoy, Bontura, did not fail to embitter refusal with insult, by observing, that if Lucca resigned Asciano, the ladies of Pisa would be deprived of their mirrors.

* Sismondi.

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Dispirited by failure, the Pisans went from one sovereign to another of their own party, offering the dominion of their city to any power which would protect them, but all refused, from the little prospect of success. At last they found Uguccione della Faggiola, a fiery Ghibeline, the Prætor of Genoa, who undertook their defence, on condition of becoming their Signore; and brought with him one thousand German horse from Romagna. He was a soldier of fortune, and, already was, by his military achievements, the terror of the Guelphs, whom he soon humbled at Lucca to sue for peace. Robert, of Naples, had sent a corps of Spanish cavalry to assist them, but Uguccione, with the brave Castruccio and exiled Ghibelines, entered the town, and only consented to make terms on condition that Pisa should have its castles and fortresses, and the Lucchese exiles their property and honours which had passed into other hands. Before this part of the treaty could be fulfilled, twenty-two of the principal Ghibeline families, including Castruccio and the Antelminelli, agreed secretly to give up Lucca to Uguccione, as the only means of getting rid of the Guelphic party headed by the Obizzi, and of recovering their rights. They arranged to be armed and ready to

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UFFIZIONE DELLA TAVOLA

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receive him. Hearing he was approaching, at the head of one thousand men, the alarmed Guelphs rose upon the Ghibelines who were surrounded, and would have perished but for the timely arrival of the Pisan force. Uguccione, furious at finding the city in tumult, attacked the Guelphs, who soon yielded or fled. King Robert's captain, and those under him, fled also, and the enemy was soon in possession of the city. A sack in all its horrors, was followed by a conflagration, which consumed fourteen hundred houses. It was the Ghibeline's bonfire! Their plunder was extended even to the treasure confided to the city, by Clement the Fifth, of a million golden florins, which the pontiff, then resident in France, was sending to Rome; but suspecting that Henry the Seventh had come into Italy with hostile intentions, the money was deposited at Lucca, in the Church of St. Frediano, awaiting better times; but it was taken, and the archives and many valuable manuscripts were also half destroyed.

Uguccione banished about three hundred families, who took refuge at Venice, in France, Germany, Belgium, and in England, carrying with them all they could take, and enriching these countries, by diffusing the art of weaving

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silk, then little known in the north, and from which Lucca had hitherto drawn its principal revenues.

The Guelphs gone, Uguccione placed the government in the hands of his partizans, with the old titles of senate and elders (Anziani), but with only the name of liberty. He retained the election in his own power, had himself proclaimed captain-general, and appointed his eldest son his vicario, or lieutenant, at Lucca, before returning to Pisa. He had then thirty thousand regular infantry and three thousand cavalry, ready to carry on a more systematic warfare. He gave Castruccio the command of a fourth part of this force, showing the greatest confidence in his valour, fidelity, and talents, which were again put to the proof in the month of August against the Florentines at Monte Catine. Their army was commanded by two princes of the house of Naples, and reinforced by all the Guelphs of Tuscany and Romagna; but they were defeated by Uguccione, and the battle was so sanguinary, that historians report thirty thousand to have remained dead on the field. The carnage was sufficient to plunge Florence, Bologna, Siena, Perugia, and Naples, into mourning. Uguccione also lost a son, and Castruccio had a severe

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wound, which he would not permit to be dressed until the day was won. The spoils of the victors were immense, for the Florentines effeminately brought with them camp-furniture, worthy of the Sibarites, silken beds with golden fringes, rich carpets, and a thousand luxuries, which good republicans should have been ashamed to own.

After the battle of Monte Catine, where Castruccio had signally distinguished himself, he became so popular with the Lucchese, that Uguccione was seized with jealous suspicion. It has been alleged, as some excuse for his sudden change of humour towards Castruccio, that the youth, in his ardour for conquest, had led the troops he commanded into the Lunigiana, a beautiful country north of Lucca, and sacked the castles of his commander's attached friend, Spinetto Malaspina. At all events, Uguccione was determined to get rid of so dangerous a rival. He ordered his son, who governed at Lucca, to invite Castruccio to supper, arrest, and murder him; but fearing to execute his father's commands to the letter, without the sanction of his presence, he sent for him in haste. The Pisans, who were as tired of his tyranny as the Lucchese, immediately on his leaving the city, rose, crying, "Death to Uguc-

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cione!" put his partizans to the sword, sacked the palace of the podesta, and proclaimed Gaddo della Gherardescha signor of Pisa.

It is reported that Uguccione, who was a great gourmand, stopped to dine at Santa Maria half way, and lost so much time at table, that the news of the revolt at Pisa reached Lucca before he did, and enabled the people to rise, and demand, tumultuously, Castruccio's liberty. Not daring to resist them, the young hero was carried from prison, and presented to the populace in his chains, which enraged them to phrenzy, and Uguccione was obliged to fly.

Castruccio was immediately proclaimed Lord of Lucca on the very day destined for his execution, while his oppressor, who had that morning owned the signoria of two cities, found himself, by his abuse of power, an exile.

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LETTER VI.

Villa Brodrick, Bagni di Lucca.

We left the young hero Castruccio, just as he had been proclaimed Signor of Lucca. He was soon in the field again. Fucecchio, a place of much importance, large population, and well garrisoned, was within a few miles of Lucca, and in the possession of his enemies. Castruccio attacked it in the night with one hundred and fifty horse, and five hundred foot, and would have been victorious, had not the authorities, at day break, made signals to the neighbouring garrisons of St. Miniato and others. Their allies soon arrived, and Castruccio seeing the impossibility of resisting fresh troops, while the people in the streets and at the windows were fighting with all sorts of arms, and throwing out missiles, he made his way

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through the enemy, and retreated out of the town. It is related, that being amongst the last to retire, and finding himself surrounded by those who were pursuing his men, he perceived he was not known, being wounded in the face, and pretending to be one of the pursuers, he joined his own troops, who were anxiously seeking their leader, and quite dispirited. As soon as he was recognised, their courage returned, and they all faced about, and again pursued the enemy even to their own gates. This failure was compensated for by many brilliant successes. He had learnt the art of war in England and France, which enabled him afterwards to lead armies with a knowledge of tactics little understood in Italy at that period. Signally brave, himself, he had the art of communicating to the soldiery his courage and enthusiasm, and no one was gifted with so quick and sure an eye in the field of battle. Of his domestic life we learn little from biographers or historians. One only fact has been mentioned,
1314. that in 1314, after the battle of Monte Catine, he married Pina delle Streghe (of his mother's house) who was worthy of being a hero's wife, for she governed Lucca during his absences, and rendered herself both feared and revered.

Florence, then the Athens of Italy, found itself

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constrained to make head against Castruccio, to defend the independence of Tuscany. The Florentines had rejoiced at the fall of Uguccione, little suspecting to find a more terrible enemy in his rival. From the nature of their government, which changed its magistrates every two months, they could not meet Castruccio on equal terms, or cope with one who had talents, energy, promptitude, secrecy, and unity of design. He opened the war against them by seizing Pistoja, where a crafty abbot, Ormanno dei Tedici, had, by intrigue, possessed himself of the signoria, which he did not hesitate to dispose to Castruccio for a consideration in money. Some historians say the abbot was betrayed by a nephew more crafty than himself, who routed him, and surrendered Pistoja to Castruccio, on receiving the promise of his daughter Dialta's hand. The hero next turned his arms against Altopascio, eight miles from Lucca, which had been taken by the Florentines, who now trusted their army to the command of Don Raymond de Cardona, who, however, was mainly intent on enriching himself. He observed that in the brilliant army under him, there were many rich merchants, who bore impatiently the fatigues and privations of the service. In order to sell them leave of absence at a

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higher price, he resolved to complete their disgust, by leading them, in the middle of Summer, round the marshes of Brentina, where he long detained them. Many merchants obtained leave to return by rich presents, but many more fell sick and died.

Castruccio, on the other hand, invited Azzo Visconti to join him, who came with eight hundred German horse, and two hundred belonging to the lords of Mantua and Modena ; but he, also, more greedy of gold than of glory, refused to advance, till he was first paid. Castruccio did not hesitate to satisfy the mercenary, and penetrating his character, he surrounded him with the most beautiful women in Lucca, who inflamed him to fight, telling him it was against a common enemy, and that Raymond, who commanded the Florentines, had often been conquered by his father and uncle, Galeazzo and Marco Visconti. This flattery succeeded ; Azzo fought with ardour, and the battle was won—Cardona taken prisoner, the Carroccios* of Florence and of

* The Carroccio was invented by a warlike archbishop of Milan, in imitation of the Ark of the Covenant. It was a kind of moving citadel, and formed a centre and rallying point for the undisciplined valour of the age. The form was that of a great car on four wheels,

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Naples captured, and Castruccio victorious! Elated with conquest, he ordered preparations to be made for his triumph, and actually entered Lucca with all the pomp and pageant which ancient Rome allotted to her most successful heroes. The eleventh of November, sacred to Martino, the titular saint of Lucca, was the day selected.

Tuscany, and the surrounding states, burned with anxiety to witness the pageant, and were provided with a safe conduct by the conqueror. The procession moved forward at an early hour from Altopascio, preceded by crowds of the lower class, laden with the spoils, and leading flocks

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painted red, and drawn by six or eight oxen, richly caparisoned with scarlet housings. On a mast in the centre, crowned with a golden orb, floated the banners of the Republic, over a crucifix, from whence the dying Redeemer seemed to bless the marshalled host. There was a platform beneath, where the elite of the army were posted to guard the standard, and where priests administered the holy rites of religion. A military band playing spirit-stirring music, occupied the platform behind. The Carroccio was deemed the sacred palladium of the state—all were bound by oath to defend it with life. It was a most ingenious substitute for the want of order and military tactics. It gave solidity to the mass of undisciplined citizens in resisting the cavalry of their enemies, and belonged to an age when the Italian Republics depended on their own valour without the aid of mercenary troops to protect their rights. The Florentine Carroccio was furnished with a bell, called the *Martinella*, which was the Republic tocsin, and tolled for days, calling the citizens to war.

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and herds. The more valuable objects formed into trophies, followed. After them came a multitude of prisoners, flanked by Lucchese troops—the humblest first—those of more consideration behind. The Florentines manacled, with their heads and feet bare—Castruccio's soldiers crowned with joy and resplendant with gold. The Carroccios of Florence and of Naples followed, drawn backwards, their bells without tongues, and the standard of the republic reversed; the mob around, were allowed to drag the banners and ensigns of the conquered in the dust. Next in order came the prisoners of rank and those distinguished by military exploits; cavaliers and noble of different nations—Florentines, Tuscans, Spaniards, Germans, and French, all on horseback. Amongst them was the lieutenant of Robert of Naples, and the Florentine commander-in-chief, the vile Raimondo di Cardona, dressed in black, with his son, a boy, habited in cloth of silver, and mounted on a palfrey, by his side. And then came the triumphant Castruccio, in a Roman chariot, drawn by four white horses abreast, and richly caparisoned, habited in the ducal robes of purple and gold, and crowned with laurel; he sat on an elevated seat, with statues of Justice and Peace on either hand, and a cornucopia at his

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feet. His figure was tall and majestic, his countenance noble, his eyes black, and his pale expressive face shaded with a profusion of fair hair. If his colour could be heightened by proud consciousness of success, it must have been so on that auspicious day.

On either side of the car rode his sons Enrico and Valeriano. Around them the ambassadors of friendly powers, and the more distinguished knights and captains. The army followed; their arms and uniforms glittering in the sun—the equipage and military baggage brought up the rear.

The roads were strewed with branches and flowers; triumphal arches had been thrown across them, and grand *spectacles* prepared to render the pageant more imposing. Here, as the procession passed, was seen a castle, attacked by youths in white costume, and defended by others in blue. There a tournament was going on, and, in another place, an animated chase. The victors were in many places saluted with music. The concourse of spectators from the surrounding country was immense.

The city was adorned with festoons of laurel and myrtle, to receive their heroic prince. The streets were covered with carpets, the windows

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hung with arras, damask, and cloth of gold. A train of children went out to meet the conqueror, dressed in white, with wreaths of olive around their brows, and carrying banners with the arms of the Antelminelli—the eagle and serpent; then came the merchants and nobility. The juris-consults, in their long robes, mounted on beautiful Spanish mules. The elder cavaliers on gallant horses, splendidly caparisoned, accompanied by trains of servants, wearing their colours and badges. The matrons and maidens, who could modestly go no further, received him with honour near the gate; the young girls saluted him in chorus as the father of his country. There also was he met by the clergy and nobles, in rich costume, and he entered the city amidst cheers which rent the air. The bishop, dressed in his pontifical robes, with his mitre of gold and jewels, waited to receive him within the gate. The conqueror, having kissed the holy cross, the prelate, with all his clergy, preceded him, and, after making the round of the city, they halted at the cathedral, where Castruccio, descending from his car, was placed by the nobles in an ivory chair, and carried amidst renewed cheers into the Duomo opposite to the *Volto*

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*Santo,** where, prostrating himself, he offered a large portion of the spoils to enrich the church, while a thousand voices chaunted the hymn of praise. Having given thanks to God for protecting Lucca, he ordered thanksgivings to be said in the churches for his victory and preservation. The prisons were opened, and the captives liberated—all exiles were pardoned, and the public debts cancelled. The day was commemorated from year to year by a solemn feast, and enlivened by horse-races and rustic sports.

Of the prisoners of war, the officers only were retained for ransom, but they were handsomely treated, as a matter of policy as well as of humanity, Cardona only, as he deserved, remained in durance as long as Castruccio lived.

A great banquet was given by the conqueror to his illustrious captives, at which he acquitted himself not only with courtesy, but with grace and amiability, particularly towards the Florentines, whom he wished to conciliate. Fearing his persuasive powers might win them over to his cause,

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* A Crucifix said to have been saved by Nicodemus, and conveyed miraculously to Lucca in the year 780! A massive gold lamp was voted to this image in 1836, for having saved the city from the cholera!!

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the Republic drained their coffers, and imposed taxes and fines on the people to pay their ransom, which amounted to a hundred thousand florins.

The sinews of war came opportunely to renew the campaign. The unhappy Florentines were thus forced to re-equip their enemy's army, or risk being betrayed. The goal of Castruccio's ambition was to obtain possession of Florence, and he left the Guelphs no breathing time. In the same month (November,) he marched towards that fair city and seized the castles of Montemurlo and Signa; but the Florentines cared only for the capital. Having received a reinforcement of three hundred horse from Naples, Castruccio, as if to provoke them, sent two hundred under their walls. Feeling the insult keenly, they sallied forth with a large body of infantry and eight hundred cavalry, and furiously drove the Lucchese into Signa. The Florentine historians confess, that if Castruccio had foreseen this confused sortie, he might on that day, by an ambuscade, have made himself master of the city. To further annoy them, their inveterate enemy formed the project of stopping the course of the Arno, by building a high wall, and making an embankment, that the waters might overflow the city, but the engineers he consulted, persuaded him

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the undertaking was impossible, because the Arno fell three hundred feet to Gonfolino, whereas the fall is, in fact, only twenty-two feet. By this mistake Florence was saved from a new peril.

In this extremity, the Republic had no resource but another appeal to Naples for aid, reluctantly offering their Signoria for ten years to the Duke of Calabria, the king's son, who, unable to assume the government at once, sent Gualtier, Duke of Athens, to act as his lieutenant, of whose career of tyranny, in later years, I shall have much to tell you hereafter. The new lord of Florence soon followed with a hundred and fifty lancers, while the Guelph party, stimulated by John XXII., poured in troops from Sienna, Perugia, Bologna, Orvieto, and Faenza, and even Malaspina prepared, with aid lent by Can Grande, to recover the Lunigiana. But Castruccio was as crafty as he was brave; he saw the great armament collecting around him, and knowing that, if he gave them time, so many discordant elements would soon cool or disagree, he addressed himself respectfully, by letter, to the Pope's legate, who had arrived in Pisa, to administer the affairs of the League, requesting him to impart to his Holiness, that he was quite disposed to accommodate matters with Florence on reason-

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able conditions. The cardinal, highly pleased, began to treat, and the war was suspended, till his eminence discovered that Castruccio was playing upon him. In high wrath, he gave the order to commence hostilities, and publicly excommunicated the lord of Lucca. But winter had then set in, and after so much preparation, little could be done, as Castruccio had foreseen.

The Duke of Calabria hearing that two fortresses, in the Pistoja mountains, had rebelled against the Lucchese, marched the army against the city, but effected nothing—the little towns were soon retaken; Malaspina also seized his own forts, but they were recaptured, and the Marchese was forced to fly to Parma, to escape a horrible death which Castruccio had promised him, if he ever fell into his hands.

In the meantime, the Ghibelines seeing their enemies becoming formidable, resolved to call Louis of Bavaria to their assistance. The principal chiefs assembled to give him a meeting
47 at Trent, in February, 1327, advancing him 150,000 florins to defray the expedition. In May he received the iron crown at Milan—arrested the Visconti, and seized their treasures and fortresses. They were released the following year at Castruccio's intercession, and offered their

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territory again, on condition of paying for it; but Louis had not left them the means.

The Florentines, in terror at his approach, put every engine in motion to overthrow Castruccio before his arrival. They first attempted to get possession of Lucca by stratagem, but the plot was betrayed by one of the accomplices. The Quartigiani family were the principal conspirators, and twenty-two suffered the penalty of their treachery, and were, in the barbarous spirit of the age, marched into Lucca, riding backwards, on asses, and beheaded. The less guilty, one hundred in number, were exiled, and deprived of their possessions. The Florentines then encamped near St. Maria, hoping to give battle to Castruccio, but hearing of Louis's near approach, they returned in confusion.

From the moment Castruccio was known to the Bavarian, he would listen to no other counsellor. It was through his persuasion he resolved to confirm his right to the empire, by being crowned in Rome, whither he engaged Castruccio to accompany him, who reluctantly consented to absent himself, and defer his plans of aggression against Florence till his return. Louis created him Duke of Lucca, Pistoja, Prato, St. Gemignano, Colle, Volterra and the Lunigiana. The

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ceremony took place on the anniversary of his triumph, with solemnity and magnificence. Louis invested him with the ducal robes, and crowned him, as kings were crowned at that period. Castruccio then rode through the city, and was proclaimed duke, in perpetuity to his descendants, and thus finished the Republic. The Bavarian remained his guest for four months.

The Pisans had refused to admit Louis, fearing to lose their liberty, but afterwards consented to submit to his rule, on condition that he did not enter the city accompanied by Castruccio, at which Louis laughed, and prizing the friendship of the Lucchese hero more than theirs, not only led him through Pisa, but declared him his lieutenant there, and made the Pisans, in addition, give him the government of several of their dependencies.

In December he moved towards Rome, and was reluctantly followed by Castruccio, who had a presentiment that evil would be the result of his absence. He went attended by a thousand archers, with cross-bows, and three hundred chosen knights. Louis awaited him with anxiety at Viterbo, and it was to Castruccio's eloquence and tact that he owed the reception he met at Rome. He was crowned the following week at the Vati-

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can. The ceremony was performed by schismatic bishops, in contempt of the excommunication of John XXII.; or, as some historians relate, by Nicholas V., a Pope set up by himself. Castruccio carried the imperial sword at the coronation. He was appointed a senator of Rome, Count Palatine of St. John Lateran, and the emperor's lieutenant. It is said, that the day on which these honors were conferred on him, he wore a mantle of crimson silk with,* "Egli è quel che Dio vuole," embroidered in golden characters in front; and at the back,† "Sara quel che Dio vorra." In his dresses, devices, and mottos, under the veil of resignation to the will of heaven, his ambitious hopes were not concealed. Castruccio, in the eyes of the Romans, eclipsed the emperor. He had preceded him in the fame of his achievements, and equalled, and, perhaps, surpassed him in the luxury and splendour of his suite. In the midst of these triumphs he received the astounding news, that Pistoja had been taken by the Florentines—betrayed by the native Guelphs, whom he had too mercifully permitted to return. The intelligence was brought to him

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* It is as God wills. † It will be as God will have it.

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in three days; he instantly wrung a reluctant consent from the emperor to let him depart. He set out with only twelve attendants, leaving his troops to follow. His first act was to establish his government at Pisa, depriving the imperial ministers of all authority. While preparing to attack Pistoja, he was called by the Venetians and Genoese to adjust matters between them, and prevent an open rupture, which he effected to the infinite detriment of the Venetians, who, however, submitted to his decree. He then besieged Pistoja, which, after three months, was reduced by famine to capitulate.

Castruccio's power was now in its zenith—he wanted but Florence to complete his dominion, a possession which, perhaps, might eventually have made him king of Italy; but, says a living author,* "Man proposes, but God disposes." The fatigue and exposure to the sun, during the recent siege, in the hottest months of summer, in which he not only commanded in person, but worked amongst the meanest of the soldiery, brought on fever, which arrested his career of human glory in a few short days. When near

* Marchese Mazzarosa. "Storia di Lucca."

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his end, he remembered he was a Christian, and humbled himself before his God, in contrition for many sins;—mercy and peace were extended to him even at the eleventh hour. He then settled his worldly affairs, and calling for his son Henry, who was to succeed him, he gave him salutary counsel for his future government, and admonition for his soul's weal. He resigned his spirit to the Almighty giver the third of September, 1329, in the forty-seventh year of his age.

The historians and biographers are all eloquent in eulogising the Lucchese hero, except Sismondi, who, while he extols his great talents, accuses him of some acts of cruelty belonging to the semi-barbarous age, but the candid Pignotti, himself a Florentine, distinctly says, that although nurtured amidst revolutions, Castruccio never shed blood unnecessarily. His knowledge of tactics and good discipline reformed the armies of Italy, too often before his time a disorderly rabble. His system was one of decision tempered by kindness, and he never failed to quell and render obedient the most tumultuous soldiery, addressing them with the endearing epithets of sons or brothers. In every interval of peace he trained them to military exercises, fighting sham battles, besieging, attacking and defending castles,

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and always awarded premiums to the most dexterous. In the council his wisdom surpassed his age—it seemed intuitive. He honoured literature, favoured men of science, encouraged arts and manufactories, and liberally rewarded those who promoted them. Many public works remain to this day, and attest his indefatigable efforts for his country. Fortresses, castles, and watch-towers, on every mountain around us are existing monuments of his activity, while all the most remarkable bridges of the dutchy were either erected or restored by his order. Those in the sketches I send, were built by Castruccio.

Amongst the yellow, worm-eaten biographies before me, is one from the pen of the great Florentine secretary, Machiavelli, who has indulged his admiration of the Lucchese hero by writing a romance about him. Not finding any facts concerning his early years, he supposes him to have been a foundling, discovered in a priest's garden, under a vine, by the maiden sister of the venerable ecclesiastic, who brings up the boy as his own, and consigns him afterwards to Francesco Guinigi,* a Lucchese noble, who takes a fancy to

* Professor Rosini, in his interesting romance of Ugolino, published since the above was written, introduces Guinigi with his young

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his noble bearing, and trains him to arms, inculcating a hatred to the Guelphs. But all this is fabulous; my sketch is already too long to record more of Machiavelli than his concluding declaration, that if Castruccio's field of exploit had been Greece or Rome, he would have proved another Philip of Macedon or a Scipio.

I have not ventured to enter into the Guelph and Ghibeline dissentions by which the age was distracted, or the more private discord amongst themselves, which involved new divisions and intricacies. There were the Bianchi and Neri which sprung up at Pistoja from the animosities of two rival families. The Black belonged to the party of the church, and were Guelphs; the White to the Ghibelines: there were also the ultras of both factions, who opposed all who were more moderate than themselves.

My dread of exciting in your young readers a yawn, saves me further details of a period which is now ever recurred to with regret, though I often bring up its horrors to our young Italian

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protogé, Castruccio, amongst the Ghibelines at Pisa, who were plotting the overthrow of their captain general, knowing him to be playing a double part. The boy appears again and again throughout the romance.

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friends, when I hear them deplore the glories of their old Republics, and force them to admit, that the present period, though more inert, is happier in many respects.

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LETTER VII.

Villa Brodrick, Bagni di Lucca.

It was early in the troublous times to which I have been alluding, in 1302, that Dante, whose memory and writings are now Italy's pride and consolation, was exiled from ungrateful Florence, and alienated by tyranny and persecution from the party of the church to which he was at first attached.

The Ghibelines rejoiced to gain such an ally, and opened their arms to receive him at Arezzo, where he found in Uguccione della Faggiola, then for the sixth time Podestâ of the city, a valuable friend and protector. There was much in the bold audacious character of this valiant soldier and inflexible magistrate, which suited the genius, and still more the humour, of the illustrious wan-

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derer, who, there is reason to suppose, followed his fortunes some years after to Lucca, and was even engaged in the battle of Monte Catine. At all events, the fugitive captain was driven from both signiores, about the same period when the persecuted poet took refuge with the Marchese Malaspina, in the Lunigiana, from whence they both afterwards went to Verona, and were cordially received by Can Grande della Scala, who reigned there with a splendour which no other prince in Italy could equal.

Their young protector was then in his twenty-fifth year, and in the acme of his power. He was the head and front of the Ghibeline party in Lombardy, and their captain general, with a stipend of one thousand golden florins per month, in addition to his great hereditary wealth. Generous and liberal, he joined with Malaspina in assisting Uguccione, who, in 1317, returned to the Lunigiana with all the troops he could muster, in the hope of recovering his lost cities, but Castruccio was not asleep, or Pisa off its guard. An army was soon out to oppose him, and Uguccione failing to surprise his enemies, and knowing discretion to be the better part of valour, returned to Verona, where Malaspina, routed by Castruccio, who carried fire and sword into the Lunigiana,

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was doomed to follow, an exile like himself. There Dante also found another of his hosts, Guido di Castello, who had been his refuge at Reggio, and who was now a wanderer. Such were the vicissitudes of these terrible times.

Can Grande della Scala, the liberal lord of Verona, was not only surrounded by exiled Ghibelines, but by many Guelphs, who were his prisoners, or who had surrendered to his power, and who now shared the hospitality of the most splendid court of Italy. There warriors, authors, poets, artists, courtiers, and jesters had quarters particularly allotted to them, furnished and decorated according to the pursuits of each. For the warriors, the walls exhibited triumphs; for poets, were depicted the sacred bowers of the muses; for artificers, the feats of Mercury; for preachers, Paradise; and scenes and emblems of happier fortune abounded to sooth and console the exiles. For all, a table was liberally furnished, and each was invited in turn to the board of their munificent host, but Dante oftenest, whose melancholy mood his friend, on one occasion, endeavoured to chase away, by a playful artifice, which he hoped would draw forth the poet's powers of repartee.

By a hint from their lord, the servants strewed a quantity of bones under the dinner table, just

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where Dante used to sit, next his patron. The repast over, the cloth removed, the bones were discovered, and Can Grande observed jocosely to his friend "how is this; I was not aware that you ate more than others;" to which Dante replied, "Se fosse un cane come gli altri, avrei mangiato anche le ossa"—"Were I a *dog*, like others of the party, I should have eaten the bones also;"—in allusion to his hosts name, Can, which literally signifies Dog! There is a letter of the exile's extant addressed to his friend thus—"To the magnificent and victorious Lord, Can Grande della Scala, his devoted Dante Alighieri (Florentine by birth, but not in principle), wishes years of happiness, and that his glorious name may prosper." He then proceeds to inform his protector, that his renown, which raises hopes in some, and causes terror in others, had stimulated him, like the Queen of the East who journeyed to Jerusalem, to repair to Verona and judge with his own eyes. He then imparts his intention of dedicating to his best friend his "Paradiso," explaining the allegory of his then unfinished poem, in which he promises Can Grande that he will find true beatitude summed up in the words of St. John—"this is eternal life, to know thee the only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."

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The opening of the "Inferno," discovers Dante wandering through a dark wood where he loses himself, and is assailed by three beasts of prey, a panther, a lion, and a wolf. The wood is supposed by some to allegorize the vices of the age, by others, the politics by which Dante had been led away, while the animals represent, luxury, pride, and avarice. The poet is rescued by Virgil, whose aid he particularly solicits against the wolf, which he says. "makes his veins and pulse tremble."

Che questa bestia, per la qual tu gride,
Non lascia altrui passar per la sua via,
Ma tanto lo 'mpedisce, che l'uccide:
Ed ha natura sì malvagia e ria,
Che mai non empie la bramosa voglia,
E dosso 'l pasto, ha pul fame che pria.
Molti son gli animali a cui s 'ammoglia,
E più saranno ancora, infin che 'l Veltro
Verrà, che la farà morir di doglia.
Questi non ciberà terra, nè peltro,
Ma sapienza, e amore, e virtude,
E sua nazion sarà tra Feltro e Feltro.

Inferno, Canto i.

The old Mantuan thus describes the rapacious nature of the animal, whose appetite grows by what it feeds on, and who unites itself to many other beasts or vices, whose depredations will continue to increase until the *veltro*, or greyhound, comes to annihilate him, and drive out sin

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from the world. This animal was by old commentators believed to prefigure the coming of Christ to judgment. Virgil's description to Dante of the veltro, as neither feeding on, or desiring lands or wealth,* but wisdom, love, and virtue, would naturally lead a commentator to seek a superhuman original for the similitude, and find it only borne out in our incarnate Redeemer; but the erudite now suppose Dante merely to have indicated the Guelphs, whom he again and again calls wolves, and to have personified his patron Can Grande under the figure of the veltro, who was, by his strength and fleetness, to run down his enemies. The name of *cane*, or dog, first suggested the opinion, but Dante calls all the Ghibelines cani, and designates the chiefs by one or other of the specific names of that noble race. Dogs being the natural enemies of wolves, he calls Ugolino and his sons lupi and lupicini,† and the Malætesta, lords of Rimini; the great Ghibelines of Romagna, he calls *mastini*,‡ or mastiffs. The Arettini he calls Botoli,§ or barking curs, and to express that the Ghibelines turn Guelphs when they approach the Arno, he says "i cani farsi Lupi."‖

* *Peltro* may answer to our word pelf. † Inferno, Canto xxxiii.
‡ Inferno, Canto xvii. § Purgatorio, Canto xiv. ‖ Ibid.

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Looking over my notes of Professor Rossini's brilliant lectures on Tasso and Dante, which we had the pleasure and advantage of hearing during our last winter at Pisa, I am reminded that this most erudite scholar and commentator holds the opinion that the Veltro was Can Grande; possibly the recklessness of wealth ascribed to the individual prefigured may have led the learned to identify him with the lord of Verona, whose generous nature is reported, even in childhood, to have discovered a contempt for those riches which in after life he expended so nobly. It is narrated, that his father, Alberto dei Scaligeri, having led him to a secret chamber where their family treasures were concealed (the nerves of power in those adventurous days), the boy treated the gold as dross, and spurned it with contempt;* but in a recent life† of Dante, I find the young Scala was only fifteen when the "Inferno" was finished in 1308, still unknown to fame, and until that year, under the control of his brother, with whom he was only then associated in the government; hence, it is clear that the opening of the "Divina Commedia," which was commenced in 1300, could never have indicated Can Grande, then a

*Benvenuto da Imola. † Vita di Dante da Cesare Balbo, Turin, 1839.

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child, as the Veltro. His possessions also were too far from those of Monte Feltro, or even Feltre, in the Venetian's States, to have suited the locality indicated, and commentators are now, I believe, nearly agreed in giving to Uguccione, to whom the "Inferno" was dedicated, the *éclat* of having been the Veltro, who was, according to Dante's prophetic muse, to hunt down the whole wolfish pack of Guelphs, and give peace to Italy under his own sway.

Uguccione, though well born, and of a family possessing lands and castles, was himself a soldier of fortune, who might be said by a partial pen, to live for wisdom, love, and virtue, rather than pelf and possessions. The castle of his family, the Faggiolano also, was situated amongst the Feltrian Hills, in the midst of the possessions of the lords of Monte Feltro, who reigned dukes at Urbino. And fortune smiled on Uguccione—he saw himself, after holding various commands, civil and military, lord of two flourishing cities, but intoxicated with power, this able soldier forgot that justice and mercy should compose the conqueror's palladium. His governments were but fourteen miles apart, and by tyranny and oppression he saw himself in an evil hour, while passing from one to the other, excluded from both.

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In a recent publication* now before me, I find Uguccione della Faggiola fully identified with the Veltro of Dante. I also find that there was no truth in the report of his having died poor and in exile. Cherished by Can Grande, he assisted his patron in his warfare against the Guelphic Treviso, and afterwards they besieged Padua, where he lost his life under the walls, the victim of malaria, from the Brenta. A magnificent funeral and monument, ordered by Can Grande, attest in what respect Uguccione was held. Those who regarded him, lamented most his abuse of power at Pisa and Lucca. But he was the grand stay of Ghibelinism. Had the battle of Monte Catine terminated differently, the imperial power would have sunk for ever in Italy, and Robert of Naples would have reigned paramount.

In allusion to the life of the noble refugees at the Court of Can Grande, the author before me hints that it was rather humiliating for such distinguished men to be mixed up with the garrulous crowd of buffoons and mountebanks, which were sustained and paid at the court of Verona, and whose tongues spared none of them. Even

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* Del Veltro Allegorico di Dante, da C. Troya di Napoli, Firenze, 1826.

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Uguccione had his share in the jests of the motley courtiers. One day, at table, he was alluding pleasantly to the days of his youth, and to his good appetite, one of the buffoons cried out—"What wonder is that, oh, Uguccione! didst thou not at a single banquet devour the famous cities of Pisa and Lucca?" Can Grande, himself, as appears before, indulged occasionally in tricks and jests. Possibly with the same good humoured object of stirring up Dante, he asked, "how it happened that mountebanks pleased every one, and Alighieri no one?" "Because persons prefer their own resemblances," replied the stern poet sarcastically.

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LETTER VIII.

Villa Brodrick, Bagni di Lucca.

THE next individual who figures in Lucchese's history is Paolo Guinigi, in 1400, who reigned for thirty years in a prudent philanthropic spirit, till Galeazzo Visconti, lord of Milan, sent Francesco Sforza, a soldier of fortune, under pretence of assisting him against the Florentines, but in fact, at their intercession, to stir up the Lucchese to rebellion, in which he so well succeeded, that Paolo Guinigi was taken prisoner, and sent by Visconti's order to his castle of Pavia, where he died in 1430.

Perhaps it will interest you more to hear what progress the Reformation made in Lucca, when Pietro Martiri Vermigli, an enlightened Augustan monk, instructed very many in the sacred truths

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of Holy Writ, and formed there a Lutheran Church. His popularity was in its zenith in 1541, when Paul III. and Charles V., both partial to Lucca, met there to consult as to the means of bridling the new heresy throughout Europe. The friends and disciples of Pietro Martiri, feared his being at once denounced; but it was probably thought impolitic at that moment to attack the favorite of the people. The Pope returned to Rome, the emperor pursued his ill-fated expedition against Algiers, and the Reformation proceeded in Lucca. When the fact that the state had generally embraced Protestantism, became known at Rome, the new Pontiff, Paul IV., soon put the inquisition into activity, to intimidate the converts, as I learn from a recent historian, the Marchese Mazzarosa, now minister of Lucca, who also says that the republic was stimulated to put down the Reformation from motives of policy, lest Charles V. should take the matter into his own hands, and make heresy an excuse for subjugating the state to the dominion of Florence.

After Pietro Martiri was forced to take refuge in Germany, Celio Curio, a professor of the University, succeeded him in preaching the Gospel, and was protected by the senate, which was generally Protestant, till an order arrived to send him

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to Rome, when he was obliged to fly. He found an asylum at Ferrara, where the beautiful Duchess Benata, who befriended the reformers, furnished him with letters for Zurich and Berne. The following year Celio returned for his wife and children, but the spies of the inquisition soon discovered his being in Italy, and he dared not venture to enter Lucca. While at dinner at an inn of a neighbouring village, expecting to be joined by his family, the leader of the papal *Sbirri* entered the room, and commanded him in the name of the Pontiff to surrender himself; Curio arose to obey, and advanced his tall athletic figure towards the officer, unintentionally holding in his hand the great knife he had been carving with, which so alarmed the latter, that he drew back into the corner. Curio perceiving his advantage, walked straight out of the room, and proceeding through the soldiers at the door to the stables, he mounted his horse, and achieved a successful flight.

I am assured that there exists amongst the Archives of Lucca, a deliberation of the Senate, whether they should or not, openly embrace the principles of the Reformation. The matter was long debated before the question was put to the vote. It was lost but by a single voice. Happily no martyrdom or dark deed of persecution stains

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the history of this admirable republic; amongst the reformed, the weak were obliged to submit and return, outwardly at least, to the Church of Rome; whilst the strong in faith were permitted to take refuge in Switzerland and Flanders. Many are the noble Italian names, which still reflect honor on the land of their ancestors, and maintain the faith in these countries; amongst them are the Sismondi, Calandrini, Burlamachi, Visconti, Diodati, &c. Above sixty families, many of them merchant nobles, emigrated from Lucca alone, carrying with them into Flanders and Switzerland, the arts and manufactories of their country, particularly silk-weaving, which proved another blow to the prosperity of their native land. Their property was at first confiscated, but many had their lands restored in after ages. A family of Martini, at Antwerp, I believe, still draw the rents of their Lucchese estates, which are administered by an agent. It is remarkable that many Lucchese families, which are extinct here, still exist in Geneva, and *vice versa*.

It may interest you to hear how a Duchess of Farrara became the protectress of the poor refugees of the Reformation. It was in 1527 the Duke Ercole II. of the house of Este, married Benata, daughter of Louis XII. of France, whose

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dower was the duchies of Chartres and Montargis. The princess, though only eighteen, was distinguished for high intellectual endowments, and considerable knowledge of the Greek and Latin classics. She was also remarkable for personal beauty and captivating manners, the result of a noble nature, combined with a sweet disposition.* In fact, heaven gifted this exalted lady with qualifications to fit her for the duties she was called to fulfil. Benata had been awakened in the May morn of life, to the truths of the Reformation, at the court of Margaret of Navarre, where she enjoyed the conversation of the learned and devout men, by whom that queen was surrounded. Arrived in Italy, she naturally wished to extend the blessings she enjoyed to those around her, but at first she would only indulge her zeal, in receiving many distinguished converts driven from France, by the increasing persecutions. Her governess, Madame de Soubise, and the French poet, Marot, were amongst these. Calvin also sought her protection, and contributed to strengthen her principles.

I remember my valued friend, Mrs. Money, startling me one evening at the consulate house

* Muratori. Antichità Estense.

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at Venice, by saying, she considered even beauty a talent, and given as a means of usefulness. It certainly proved so in the case of the Duchess of Farrara. It was her graces of person and manner which enabled her to retain her power over her consort, and ensure his protection for her refugee friends, even against his principles. Many of his subjects were converted, and a Protestant Church established and maintained at Farrara, for some years. Her influence also extended to Modena, which then belonged to the House of Este, and produced converts worthy to be amongst duchess' correspondents. But a new Pope, Julius III., irritated Ercole with remonstrances and threats. The Reformed Church was dispersed, and the persecution became general. The Duke in vain besought the Duchess to renounce the new opinions. She had the most painful of conflicts to endure, in resisting her husband's commands. To prove her to the utmost, the Pope sought the interference of Henry II. of France, her nephew, who sent Cardinal Ority, his inquisitor, to Farrara, to expostulate, and she was obliged to listen to his homilies and reproofs, but, finding her immoveable, he declared her, in the Pope's name, unworthy of all human fellowship, and ordered her children to be sent away from her, her faith-

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ful servants and friends to be tried for heresy, and persecuted, and her own liberty to be proscribed. Thus, the high-minded Duchess saw herself a prisoner in her own palace, and her children torn from her bosom ; but the bitterest trial was the reproaches of her husband, who was at last instigated to treat her with the utmost austerity, till, in 1559, it pleased the all-wise to call him to his great account. Benata was then enabled to retire to her Dutchy of Montargis, in France, where she established a Reform Church, and opened her gates to the persecuted. The Duke of Guise, who had married her daughter Anne, of Este, came against her with an armed force, and sent an envoy before him to inform her, that if she did not give up the rebels she was protecting, he must turn his cannon against her walls. "Tell your commander," replied the Duchess, "that I will mount the breach myself, and see if he has courage to kill a king's daughter." This spirited reply relieved her of further molestation. She lived till 1575.

That beautiful portrait by Titian, with the flowing golden tresses and the rich ruby drapery, in the Sciarra Colonna gallery in Rome, which the Custode misnames "Titian's Mistress," is, I am assured, a portrait of the peerless Duchess. I am

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indebted to that admirable artist, and accomplished scholar, Mr. Severn, for ascertaining the fact. In his persevering researches amongst ancient chronicles, connected with the arts, he discovered that Titian went to Farrara expressly to paint the portrait of the Duchess Benata, and he afterwards traced the picture to the collection now divided between the houses of Sciarra Colonna and Barberini. It is the custom of the Custode, every where, when at a loss for a name to give to a female portrait, to say she was the artist's mistress. I remember, when I carried Count Cicognara my copy in miniature, of that very portrait, to criticise and correct, how indignantly he defended the fame of Titian from the defamation of modern *Custodi*, affirming that the great Venetian painter never had a mistress, and that, like Michael Angelo, he had no time for folly and immorality. His beauties, if not portraits of distinguished personages, always represented beloved objects of his own immediate family. Count Cicognara was still more annoyed at Burnet, in his excellent hints on painting, calling the celebrated picture in the Louvre, with a mirror, "Titian and his mistress," he seized a pencil at once, and wrote in the margin of our copy, the following refutation—"The painting is by Titian, though some

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call it Giorgone, and it represents Laura Eustochi at her toilette—her admirer, the Duke Alfonso of Farrara, who afterwards married her, supporting the looking-glass."

Having mentioned the lamented Cicognara, with whom we passed so many happy and profitable days, weeks, and months, during our first years in Italy, I find it necessary to bridle my pen, or you would have an episode in praise of a distinguished modern, in the midst of Lucca's history of the middle ages. On some more fitting occasion, I must compensate myself by writing about one, of whom I sadly feel we "ne'er shall look upon his like again."

Lest I weary you with too many historical abridgments, I shall only further remind you, that this flourishing republic was nominally governed by the Gonfalonieri, or chief magistrate, who was changed every two months, during which period he was maintained at the expense of the state, from whence the government was called "*Il Governo delle sessanta Minestre;*" the minestra being the domestic soup of the people. But the French came and emptied the coffers of the republic, and in 1779, when Suwarow was in Italy, the Germans, in pure friendship, carried away the fine bronze cannon, the city's pride and defence,

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and even made the Lucchese pay for their transport.* After various changes, Napoleon sent his sister in 1805, whose popular government I have mentioned before. Princess Baciocchi was also sovereign of Tuscany, with the title of Grand Duchess, from 1809. She succeeded the King and Queen of Etruria, whom Buonaparte barbarously deposed, and gave their territory to a member of his own family.

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* Mazzarosa, Storia di Lucca. Tomo II. page 195.

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LETTER IX.

Villa Broderick, Bagni di Lucca.

I PROMISED in my last to try the patience of your young readers no more with extracts from accredited historians, and dry, worm-eaten chronicles. What I have now to communicate, though highly historical, shall be drawn from the eloquent lips of the living, and also from the private memorials of one, now amongst the illustrious dead, whose career was too early arrested by the trials and persecution which I am about, with heart-felt interest, to relate. I have told you that the King and Queen of Etruria were driven from Florence to make room for Princess Baciocchi; you will, perhaps, be surprised, like many others, to hear who were the king and queen thus indignantly dethroned by Napoleon's caprice, and to learn

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that they were no other than the present estimable sovereign of Lucca and his august mother, daughter to Charles IV., King of Spain. No historian has fully narrated the severe treatment these exalted personages met with at the hands of the Emperor Napoleon, who, under the guise of friendship, hurled them from the realm which their own Spanish possessions had purchased from him by solemn treaty, and who also deprived them of Parma and Piacenza, their hereditary birth-right. Sir Walter Scott has alluded to their wrongs, but not detailed them in all their bearings. The game Napoleon played was so complex—so incredible, that I rejoice to have been permitted to peruse a little memoir of thrilling interest from the queen's own pen; and I have also had the advantage of communicating with one who may be said to have shared her misfortunes. This privilege I have requested, expressly to enable me to give you an authentic detail of events, in which you will feel interested as we do.

Maria Louisa of Bourbon was married at the early age of thirteen and a-half to the Infante Don Lewis, eldest son of the Duke of Parma, a collateral branch of the royal family of Spain. At so tender an age, the King and Queen of Spain

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naturally wished their daughter and her consort to reside with them. The happiness of the young princess of Parma left her nothing to desire; her husband was amiable, and devotedly attached to her, and after six years* she presented him with a son, the present Duke of Lucca, who received the name of Charles Lewis, after his father and grandfather.

The following year, by a treaty entered into between the French Republic and the house of Austria, the Prince and Princess of Parma were called to the throne of Tuscany, with the titles of King and Queen of Etruria. To obtain this territory in Italy, for their daughter, the royal family of Spain made immense sacrifices to France in ships of the line, fully equipped, and specie; they also gave up the state of Louisiana, and the reversion of Parma and Piacenza at the demise of the Duke Don Ferdinand, then reigning. In the month of April, 1801, the new sovereigns left Spain for Tuscany. The queen's *naive* memoir, written with all the simplicity which distinguishes genuine truth, describes the pain she felt at leaving her family and country, and how it was aggravated

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December 19, 1799.

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by the communication, made by the Prince of the Peace, that the first consul required them to go first to Paris, in order that he might see what effect the presence of members of the Bourbon family would produce in France! "We shuddered to think," writes her Majesty, "how little our safety was cared for in a country where so many of our race had already been atrociously massacred. It was in vain we entreated to be excused—we were forced to proceed." The royal household and guards of Spain accompanied the young sovereigns to the frontier, where the greater part of their personal suite was obliged to return, and a French general was appointed to accompany them to Paris. There they took up their residence in the hotel of the Spanish minister. During twenty days séjour in the French capital, they were treated, the queen says, with the utmost respect, and invited to several fêtes, but she was attacked with tertian-fever, and unable to leave her bed. Another French general was appointed to conduct the young king and queen to Tuscany. They passed through Parma, where they had the happiness of being received with the utmost tenderness by their parents, the duke and duchess, which proved a lasting consolation.

On the twelfth of August, 1801, they entered

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Florence. The kingdom had already been taken possession of in their name, by a minister dispatched from Parma. The state was then occupied by French troops, under the command of General Murat. The royal palace they found ransacked, and so unfurnished, that they were obliged to have recourse to the Tuscan nobility, to supply, in this emergency, what was indispensable for the immediate use of the court. The first act of the king of Etruria was to demand, that the French troops, so obnoxious to his new subjects, should be withdrawn from the Tuscan territory, but he could never obtain more than their removal to Leghorn and Pisa; and in forming her court, the queen, with great difficulty, obtained permission to retain a single Spanish lady about her person—the others were sent home. The king, who had also suffered from ague, was soon attacked by disease of the chest, and a cough, which resisted medical treatment, and occasioned him considerable suffering during the winter. The following spring, the Court of Spain invited the Sovereigns of Etruria to proceed to Madrid, in order to be present at the double nuptials of the Prince of Asturias, afterwards Ferdinand VII., with a Princess of Naples, and of the hereditary Prince of the Two Sicilies,

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afterwards Francis I., with the Infanta Maria Isabella, the present queen dowager. The King of Etruria was still severely indisposed, and the queen was on the eve of her confinement, but her heart naturally sighed to be near her family again, and it was important, I believe, that her offspring should be born in Spain, in order to insure the privileges and inheritance allotted to *infants* of that realm. There is no other way to account for the risk her majesty incurred by embarking at such a moment on board the Spanish squadron, which awaited them at Leghorn. The Princess Charlotte Louisa, first saw the light during that voyage, as I remember her royal highness telling us, remarking, that she was of no country, having been born at sea. The queen was sufficiently well to land at Barcelona three days after, where the court had moved to meet them, and where the baptism was celebrated with great pomp, their Spanish majesties holding the young infanta at the font. The nuptials being over, and the King of Etruria's malady sadly augmented by news of the death of his father, the Duke of Parma, the physicians recommended his immediate return, with the queen, to Tuscany, but the court of Spain required their attendance on a tour of the provinces, and both suffered severely before they

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were permitted to embark at Carthagena. A storm at sea completed their disasters. The king survived only till the following May. Finding his end approaching, this amiable prince, with the same prudence and resignation which had distinguished him during the turbulent career of his short life, appointed his afflicted consort regent during his son's minority, and resigned his soul into the hands of the Almighty giver, on the 27th of May, 1803. It is painful to think, that his last moments were disturbed by the French ambassador, who came imperiously to demand an immediate order to be dispatched to Leghorn, for the arrest and imprisonment of all English subjects, and the confiscation of their merchandize.* The short peace of Amiens was at an end;—the torch of war was again burning furiously. The afflicted queen, a widow at twenty-one, nearly sunk under her sorrows—there were

* I believe it was on that occasion the worthy Baron Spanocchi, then governor of Leghorn, managed so well for the English that merchants and merchandize had just cleared the harbour as Napoleon arrived in person to witness their arrest. His fury was to no purpose, he saw the fleet sail away under a fair wind without the power of even sending a shot after them. It was then he is reported to have said, pointing to the English cemetery, "Voila ces fiers Insulaires. Fiers même dans la mort." Baroness Spanocchi was English, and one of our earliest friends in Italy.

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fears for her life—but she felt the claims of the nation and of her family, and exerted herself to the utmost to fulfil the duties of an arduous administration, rendered more difficult by the breaking out of the yellow-fever at Leghorn. This scourge required prompt measures to prevent the contagion spreading, and obliged the queen, contrary to her inclinations, to raise contributions and impose taxes, to defray the expenses of the cordon, and also to meet the more galling tax of the French troops. After reiterated supplications, her majesty at length succeeded in having these removed, and replaced by a Spanish corps, which contributed considerably, she says, to tranquillize her amidst many sorrows and annoyances. She had, however, the joy of seeing her son, the young king, in robust health, docile, affectionate, full of intelligence, and making rapid progress in his education. She was just beginning to hope there was yet some happiness in store for her, when a new trial fell like a thunderbolt on her devoted head.

On the 23rd November, 1807, the French minister followed her majesty to a country palace, and announced the astounding intelligence that Spain had ceded to France the kingdom of Etruria, and consequently that she must prepare

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to depart without delay, the French troops having arrived to take possession of the territory! The ambassador added, that according to the secret treaty which deprived her majesty of Tuscany, she should receive in compensation, a portion of Portugal, under the denomination of the kingdom of Lusitania! The queen, in consternation at the announcement, dispatched a courier to Madrid, but before an answer could arrive, and in the rigour of winter, her majesty was obliged to resign the government and depart. The French troops were already in possession of Florence, and the royal family were no sooner gone, than a proclamation absolved the Etruscan people from their allegiance to Charles Lewis. The afflicted queen received the reply she expected from the court of Spain *en route;* it merely recommended her hastening to Madrid, intimated that the kingdom of Etruria no longer belonged to her, and assured her that it was only in the bosom of her family she could find consolation. Napoleon was at that moment at Milan, surrounded with all the pomp of empire. The queen repaired there immediately with her children. He received her graciously, and even with a show of affection. A veteran courier, who had been till that period her majesty's page,

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told me that the emperor conducted her to the opera, placed her next to himself in the royal box, and held the young king on his knee during the performance. The queen's memoir before me says, "I expressed to the emperor my grief for having been forced to leave Florence, and supplicated him to let me return there, rather than oblige me to accept a portion of Portugal; he had the effrontery to answer, that for his part he would have left me in peaceful possession of the kingdom of Etruria, had not my family provoked the exchange, wishing to have me near them." Having just then resolved to usurp the whole of the Peninsula, Buonaparte tried to persuade her majesty not to go to Spain, and proposed her remaining at Nice, or Turin, adding, "have you not heard the news from Madrid?" alluding to the events of San Lorenso, of which she was quite ignorant, the imprisonment of her brother (afterwards Ferdinand VII.) in that convent, on the charge of high-treason, through an intrigue of the Prince of the Peace, who was then said to be in the pay of Napoleon, and who persuaded the King of Spain to believe his son to be a traitor. Alarmed by this distressing communication, the afflicted queen was more than ever anxious to join her family, in order to persuade them of the impos-

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sibility of her accepting the sovreignty of Portugal, which would be to dispossess her own sister and brother-in-law, then reigning there. With this intention she proceeded on her journey through France, with the utmost celerity, and was every where received (but more particularly at Lyons) with demonstrations of respect and sympathy. The royal family met her at Arranjuez, and she was soon undeceived with respect to their having taken any part in depriving her of the kingdom of Etruria. Though shocked at discovering Napoleon's duplicity, the assurance proved a relief, and she determined to renew her entreaties to be permitted to return to her beloved Tuscany. In the following winter a revolution was got up at Madrid, to oblige Charles IV. to abdicate in favour of his son, and Ferdinand VII. was proclaimed. The new king warmly seconded his sister's wishes, and resolved to use his utmost power to restore her realm. How vain were his hopes! his own dethronement followed in a few short days, and he was forced to remove to Bayonne, with all the members of the royal family, except the Queen of Etruria and her son, whose departure was deferred on account of indisposition. Madrid was already invested with French troops, under the com-

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mand of Murat. It was only on her majesty's arrival at Bayonne, some days after, that she was informed of the treachery of which her whole house were the victims. The first words of her august parents were, "You must now, Oh, daughter, be made aware of the sad truth, that our family have for ever ceased to reign." Overwhelmed by this communication, the afflicted queen retired to her chamber, she says, more dead than alive; but the remembrance that she was a mother, soon restored her energy, and Buonaparte being then at Bayonne, she demanded the right of negotiating through the Chevalier Nuti, whom she appointed her plenipotentiary. M. de Champagny, Napoleon's Minister of foreign affairs, first talked of adhering to the pretended treaty of Fontainbleau, but it was afterwards acknowledged that the emperor, having now promised the deputies of Lisbon to preserve Portugal entire and undivided, the queen could no longer possess a portion of that kingdom, therefore she was at liberty to ask for a compensation. Her minister, feeling aware of her wishes, immediately demanded the restitution of her kingdom of Etruria. The emperor replied, that he could never consent to give up Tuscany again; he chose to rule there, in order to exclude

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British commerce entirely from the port of Leghorn, and it would be useless to press the subject farther. The queen then demanded the States of Parma and Piacenza, her son's legitimate birthright, with some augmentation in lieu of the immense sacrifices* which Spain had made to procure her Tuscany. To this demand, Napoleon replied, through his minister, that he was determined to retain all Italy under his sole dominion, and that no sovereign should share the least part, or interfere, on account of the conscription. The Chevalier Nuti still urged the possibility of obviating, by private negotiation, any inconvenience on that score; but Napoleon was resolute, boldly declaring that his grand political projects excluded the Bourbons from Italy. In compensation, the queen was to have an annual stipend from his treasury, and to soften the bitterness of his despotic decision, the emperor added, that "the weight of governing was always overwhelming, and that she would be happier enjoying her good income without care." It was in vain her minister urged, that as the guardian of her son, the

* Amongst which was the State of Louisiana, ultimately disposed of by France to the United States, for the immense sum of eighty-four millions of francs.

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queen could never listen to such reasoning—however, it availed not. He then tried to make the best terms he could, respecting the promised pension, but M. de Champagny pleaded the emperor's immediate departure for Paris, and the necessity of adjourning the negotiation, which Napoleon had, in fact, no intention of ever bringing to a just termination. While the Queen of Etruria was urging to the utmost her son's claims to Parma, if not to Tuscany, the miserable pittance was made known, which was allotted to her dethroned parents and their children, of only four hundred thousand francs, or £16,000 a year each, in lieu of all right and title to the kingdom of Spain. Her brothers and uncle were then sent to Valençay, where they were detained in durance in a castle belonging to Prince Talleyrand, till Napoleon's fall, and the ex-king and queen were obliged to repair to Fontainbleau, where their persecuted daughter was ordered to follow them with her children. In order to keep up the shadow of royalty, the King and Queen of Spain were lodged in the palace, with an imperial retinue of ladies, gentlemen, and guards, appointed to their service; but no accommodation was thought of for the Queen of Etruria, her children and small suite, except a miserable

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apartment, which obliged her majesty to seek a country house in the vicinity. She had told Napoleon, at Bayonne, that she would prefer a separate establishment, and he seemed to approve the project; but after having selected and furnished a convenient villa at Passy, with the approbation of her family, and arranged all matters to remove there, she was refused post horses, and when others were found for her, and she was already in her carriage, she was stopped at the outer gate of the palace, and forced to return, accompanied by a general officer, who, with the appearance of deep concern, informed her that he had received orders to prevent her departure, and to place double sentinels on her apartments. In addition to this vexation the proprietors of the hired house insisted on a year's rent, and that all they had expended to put it in order should be reimbursed. The afflicted queen tried to rise superior to these annoyances, but her health gave way, and she became subject to fearful nervous attacks, which in her own touching detail she says rendered her during the paroxysms scarcely responsible for her actions. The treatment this unfortunate princess received called forth the sympathy of all around her. It was deemed advisable, by her august parents, that she should address an expostulation to

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the emperor: he only replied "that she was in the wrong and must remain with her family." Some days after an order came that the ex-King and Queen of Spain should remove to Compiégne, and that the subject of this memoir should follow in their train. The same advantages awaited them there—full enjoyment of the palace, its gardens, woods, and pleasure grounds; but for the Queen of Etruria was assigned a wretched suite of apartments, overlooking the court yard, the saddest and most inconvenient of the building. On her arrival she demanded the first month of her pension, according to the assignment made to the infants of Spain, and was informed that the French government had decided to take of 12,000 francs to defray the expenses of her compulsory journey! No pension was allowed for the royal children, under pretext of their not having been entered in the Imperial Almanac as infants of Spain, though the queen's stipend was quite insufficient for their support and education. Her health sunk daily under reiterated vexations, until her physician declared riding exercise to be absolutely necessary. She had no horses, nor till her pension became payable would she incur the expense, and with virtuous resolution continued to walk with

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her children, though little able for the fatigue. There is no way to account for the persecution this royal lady suffered at the hands of Napoleon, except we suppose he feared her exertions for her son's restoration, and wished to break her spirit. The royal family of Spain, who submitted to his decrees, and who seemed not to have a wish beyond what was allotted to them, met with indulgence and consideration. When the air of Compiégne was supposed to disagree with the king's health, they were permitted to remove to Marseilles. They wished their daughter to follow them, but she resisted, and was allowed to remain till an order arrived for her to proceed to Parma, where Buonaparte informed her chamberlain that he would give her a palace, and that her pension should be augmented to 50,000 francs a month. This seemed like concession, but even indulgences were granted with so much rigour, that although the queen and her son were both indisposed, they were obliged to proceed on their journey on the day indicated. At the moment of departure the royal travellers received a letter from Napoleon wishing them a good journey, and that they might enjoy the new country they were going to inhabit, but without naming it. Their progress was prosperous as far as Lyons. There the queen

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was annoyed to find the hotel surrounded with *Gens D'armes*, and her suite, who had preceded her, already gone forward. A commissary of police presented himself, followed by the prefect, charged with a government order, importing that her majesty should repair to Nice, and not to Parma, and adding with a peremptory tone, that she and her children should proceed at once, although it was past midnight. With difficulty, however, they obtained permission to remain at Lyons till the morning, the officers keeping guard over them, one in the outer chamber, the other waiting below. From Lyons the queen was constrained to travel for three days by water, and pay the passage, in an incommodious boat, though her wish was to go by land. Her journal proceeds thus—"We were forced to submit every where to their mandates, and suffer all this annoyance, and all their ill treatment, and for what reason? merely to oblige us to take another route, for which a single word would have sufficed. Arrived at Avignon, we were permitted to travel by land to Nice, which we entered the 18th April, 1809. I immediately sent a strong appeal to the government to obtain an augmentation of my pension, according to the promise held out; but all remonstrances and

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supplications made by my faithful *Chargé d'Affaires* were useless, his letters remained unanswered. Obliged to provide a house, I preferred the environs of the town (for economy). Thus were the fine promises made me realised, and my misery was *au comble.* There was no consideration for my family. The slightest order sent respecting us, was executed with a degree of rigour which kept us incessantly in a state of terror and alarm. What tormented me the most was, to see the life of my son in the power of a tyrant. This agitation, and the uncertainty of the means of subsistence, depending in fact on the caprice of one who had proved himself so regardless of his promises, and who broke them with so little scruple, marching us from town to town, with every aggravating circumstance of distress and inconvenience, joined to the temptation which the aspect of the sea held out, made me conceive the project of escaping, with my children, from the thraldom in which we were held, and throwing ourselves into the arms of England, in the hope that as that country has been at all times the refuge of unfortunate princes, she would take under her protection a family which had become the plaything of a tyrant, and was abandoned by the whole world."

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The execution of so bold a project required the aid of a faithful courageous adherent, and active agent. The rigorous *surveillance* of the French police rendered the enterprise most difficult, if not impossible. The anxious mother, however, was not dispirited. Her thoughts immediately turned on Signor Gaspero Chifenti of Leghorn, whose worth she had an opportunity of knowing and appreciating, during her reign in Tuscany. To this gentleman she imparted her wishes, and confided her plans by means of a secret correspondence. While meditating if his duty to a numerous family would permit him to undertake so dangerous an enterprise, renewed and pressing entreaties arrived from her, whom he still considered as his legitimate sovereign. Could he refuse his aid to release her from a baneful bondage? and could he shut his heart against one who placed her fate in his hands? The hope of rescuing her silenced every other consideration. The devoted Chifenti at once repaired to Sicily with credentials from her majesty to engage the royal family of Naples, who had taken refuge there under the protection of a British force, to place at her disposal an English, or Sicilian vessel, which could wait under the heights of Nice, to receive her and her children on board during the

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night. Ferdinand IV. was nominally king, but his Queen, Caroline, sister of the unfortunate Maria Antoinette of France, had the sole management of public affairs.* She received Chifenti apparently with warmth, and exhibited great concern at her niece's severe trials and painful situation, promised to assist him to the utmost for her relief. The same favourable assurances were given him by Lord Amherst, then ambassador from England to the court of Sicily. The zealous envoy, highly satisfied with his reception, indulged the most favourable hopes. He heard the order given, that two Sicilian frigates should be put in repair and fitted out for his sovereign's release—he watched their progress daily—he saw them nearly completed, and longed to impart his hopes to his royal mistress, but he did not dare to write least he should compromise her, and there was no direct communication between Sicily and any port to which Napoleon's power extended. He hoped soon to be himself the bearer of the glad tidings, that all was ready for her flight. It was

* I could not help inquiring how the king employed himself while the queen was legislating. My informant frankly replied—"His majesty generally lived in the country, enjoyed *la chasse* in the morning, went fishing at noon, and milked the cows in the evening. The management of a dairy was amongst the royal pastimes," which we must admit were harmless.

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after two months' anxious expectation, that his quick eye detected a cloud on the brow of Queen Caroline. Convinced that something was wrong, he sought the confidence of a lady of the court, and drew from her a confirmation of his fears. Signor Chifenti at once demanded an audience of her majesty, who, as if conscious he had some cause of complaint, warmly met him, with lamentations respecting her own peculiar discomforts, detailing the disappointments she met with in life, the ingratitude by which she was requited, and the little she found worth living for. The faithful missionary in a noble cause, did not fail to avail himself of this opening to contrast her majesty's prospects and good fortune in having saved half her dominions in such disastrous times, and in possessing the protection of a just and powerful nation, with that of her royal niece, who had been robbed almost of the means of subsistence, and who lived in continual fear of a worse fate. He then asked the queen if it were possible she had cooled on the subject of sending her assistance. Thus assailed, the Sicilian sovereign could no longer dissemble. A Spanish diplomatist lately arrived, had, she acknowledged, represented the Queen of Etruria in such unfavourable colours as to convince her, she was unworthy of

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consideration. He had charged her with having taken part with the French in Spain, and produced a Madrid gazette, containing two letters said to have been written by her majesty to Murat, after the departure of her family for Bayonne, urging him to enter the city. Signor Chifenti, convinced from various circumstances, that the letters were fabrications, boldly defended his queen, and spurned the allegations of the Spaniard against her moral character, which he well knew to have been in the highest degree pure and immaculate. His earnestness seemed to produce some effect on the royal ear, but instead of at once renewing her promise of aid in the cause he so warmly supported, the wily queen suggested, that zeal like his might be even more worthily employed in an enterprise which would crown him with glory in this world and the next—that of assisting the escape of Pius VII., from the prison in which he was detained in Piedmont. She even went so far as to propose his taking the frigates, then nearly ready, to the coast, to coalesce with those who were trying to procure the liberation of his holiness from a castle in the interior, in which he had been so long immured. With all due respect and commisseration for the aged prisoner, Signor Chifenti protested against

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the possibility of his undertaking other enterprise but that of assisting the escape of his own sovereign. Finding him more steadfast and resolved than she had hoped, the queen again promised aid. The frigates being nearly ready, he requested her majesty would give him a letter to her niece, expressive of her royal approbation.

The Queen of Etruria's sister (the present Queen Dowager of Naples,) also wrote, expressing her admiration of the envoy's zeal, and her anxiety for her success. He hoped he had surmounted all difficulties when he discovered one morning, with dismay, that the promised frigates had absolutely sailed in the night for Spain. Some excuse of necessity, however, was found for this piece of bad faith, and another vessel was profered, which, in like manner, sailed away as soon as it was ready. In fact, the Spanish diplomatist who was working against him, belonged to the junta which then governed Spain, in behalf of the legitimate line. They were intent on establishing a free constitution while the reins of power were in their hand. Probably the Spaniard feared that the Queen of Etruria, once liberated from Napoleon, would naturally land in her own country, seek British protection there, and, with her son, a fine promising young prince, win the

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people's favour, raise a party to acquire power, which the junta were not then disposed to relinquish. It is also probable that Queen Caroline, who was at that period seeking to conciliate Napoleon's favour, deemed it impolitic to irritate him respecting the Queen of Etruria, and there is even reason to fear, that she was base enough to write and betray her niece's plans of escape to the emperor.

The perfidy of one whose dark deeds and machinations tarnished our Nelson's laurels, will be readily believed where his memory is honored and his infatuation deplored. After five weary months, the devoted Chifenti saw that his cause was hopeless, and prepared to depart. All his documents bear testimony of the sympathy and consideration he met with from Lord Amherst, the British envoy, who lamented the delicacy of his position precluded the possibility of assisting him except he had direct instructions from England to that effect. He, however, gave him strong letters of recommendation to Lord Collingwood, who commanded the fleet in the Mediterranean, and also to Admiral Martin.

After Signor Chifenti had sent his effects on board the vessel which was to carry him to Italy, the queen dispatched an express from a palace in

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the country, desiring to have back the letter which she had given him, on the pretext of sending him another ; he was happy to be able to say it was already gone, and to embark before her majesty could take measures to detain him. The letters he had obtained were the only testimony he had to lay before his own queen in proof of his having to the utmost laboured in her service.

I have often thought how the *then* Princess of Calabria, of whose warmth of heart we can speak from personal experience, must have mourned to see the faithful envoy depart from Sicily, his mission fruitless, and her sister's hopes of release frustrated by the selfish policy and intriguing spirit of her heartless relative.

Signor Chifenti returned at once to Italy, and repaired to Nice, to detail his failure in all its bearings, to her whom he considered as his royal mistress, and from whom he had the consolation of hearing that in despair at receiving no news from him, she had dispatched her major domo, the Marchese Sassi della Tossa, by the way of Holland, to the court of England, charged with the same mission, and her majesty had already the satisfaction of hearing of his safe arrival at Amsterdam, where he was only awaiting a propitious opportunity to embark for Great Britain. The

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queen corresponded with her envoy, by previous arrangement, in a manner so mysterious that she hoped her communications were impenetrable. We shall see hereafter how sadly she was deceived. It was not long after Signor Chifenti had returned to the bosom of his family at Leghorn, and removed to his country villa, without an apprehension for the future, that the queen's house was on the 6th of April, 1811, disturbed at one o'clock in the morning, by the commissary of police, who demanded entrance for himself and a detachment of *Gens D'armes*, while others of the party scaled the walls. The soldiers carried handcuffs, cords, and two sacks. The pretext of their intrusion was, that an Englishman was reported to be concealed in the premises. Sentinels were placed at every door, the house rigorously searched, every paper examined, and what they chose carried away. The equerry, *maitre d'hotel*, and two servants, were arrested and sent to Paris, where the queen had also the horror of hearing that her faithful envoys Sassi and Chifenti, were already prisoners in the Temple!

The French government had in fact early been made aware of her projects, and had permitted them to proceed uninterrupted, until the moment

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of success. A hint from Palermo had probably drawn their attention to her correspondence. No cypher would baffle the skill and experience of the practised police of that day, and all the well-concerted plans of the anxious mother, trembling for the safety of her son, and panting for liberty, became fully known to them.

For some months after her house had been thus rudely assailed and ransacked in the night, she heard no more, and only knew that her pension was stopped, and her hopes fallen to the ground! You may imagine her cruel suspense—no tidings reached her respecting those, who to assist her liberation, had become liable to persecution. The afflicted lady, wretched to think of having involved her faithful adherents, wrote herself to Napoleon, assuring him that if there were blame, it should all fall upon her, and on her alone, exculpating to the utmost those who were under suspicion of having aided her. She heard soon after that her offence was trying before a military tribunal, and on the 2nd of August, returning from church, she found the commissary of police with her condemnation in his hand, which had been publicly pronounced! After having read it, he announced to the queen, that by an excess of clemency on the part of the Emperor, her pu-

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nishment was commuted to being shut up in a monastery at Rome with her daughter, and that her son should be sent to his grandfather, then at Marseilles!

I have always heard amongst the old adherents of the family, that horror at the fate of the Duke d'Enghein was the great stimulant to the queen's heroic exertions to escape to England. Her son also, a branch of the house of Bourbon, full of youthful promise, spirit, and talent, might well tempt the usurper to another of those acts which Talleyrand, in the cold, calculating decisions of diplomacy, pronounced to be not only a crime but worse, " c' etait une faute diplomatique !"

I have heard, but I have no means of verifying the fact without giving pain, and recalling bitter remembrances, where I could wish every retrospect to be happy—that a dark deed was not only once meditated, but on the point of being perpetrated. It was in the dead of night, in a lonely country, that the royal child was made to descend from a travelling carriage—there was no one present but the victim and his appointed murderers, whose weapons were already in their hands, when the distant tramp of a horse was heard—the assassins hesitated—they cowered—the sound came nearer—the horse stopped, and

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the voice of authority was raised. It was an order to let him live. The epoch I know not, nor its locality, but it is remembered, and has been pointed out to him who imparted thus much to me, as a necromancer shows a reflection in a mirror, and then dissolves it. The occurrence probably, took place during the separation I must now detail.

Within twenty-four hours after its announcement, the queen's sentence was put into execution, and the agonized mother was forced away from her beloved child, her attached household, her property, and every thing that belonged to her, as it might be for ever! She was only permitted to carry with her a single lady of honour,* a physician, and a maid servant. The same commissary, who brutally tore her son from her arms, was destined to attend her throughout her journey, during which, his cruel treatment never relaxed. "We were also exposed to the insults of the populace," writes the queen, "they hissed and shouted when they perceived a carriage with females, conducted by an officer of police. It was thus, after ten days travelling, we arrived in Rome. At the last post we had been consigned

* Who was only allowed to remain twenty-four hours in Rome.

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to a Roman commissary, who conducted us to the monastery of St. Domenico, in Sisto, near the Quirinal ; it was then nine o'clock at night. The prioress, with a single taper in her hand, came to the portal to receive us. No beds, no supper, no apartments, were prepared, though a queen and her daughter were expected."

Yet is it the boast of that convent to this day, to have lodged the Queen of Etruria! It was the first information a young nun, the Marchesa Sassi, whom we visited there in 1833, gave us, with evident pride, through her double grating, while enumerating the distinguished ladies which her monastery numbered among its guests and sisterhood. She added, that the French General, Miollis, visited her majesty weekly. How little I then thought of the interest we should hereafter feel in the royal captive.

We must now return to the unfortunate prisoners in Paris. From the moment the attention of the police was awakened by information, that the queen meditated escape, her correspondence was vigilantly watched, and her cypher too, soon penetrated. Two letters, written to Signor Sissi, at Amsterdam, mentioned Chifenti's return from Sicily, and total failure, as the strongest stimulant to *him* to pursue his way, and

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obtain British aid. These, and all his instructions, relative to his mission, were found on his person when he was arrested. Signor Chifenti, in total ignorance of any thing that had occurred, was seized at his villa, near Leghorn, and also conveyed prisoner to Paris. These unfortunate men were confined in separate cells, and ordered by Napoleon to be tried by a military tribunal, for having corresponded with persons inimical to the state. In vain, by means of their counsel, they remonstrated, and declared the incompetency of such a court to try them. The tribunal opened its proceedings on the 22d of July, 1811. With respect to the Marchese Sassi, the papers found on him were sufficient evidence of the act he was about to commit, and his advocate could only endeavour to exonerate him from every idea of culpability, by proving that he merely acted in compliance with the commands of his sovereign and mistress, whom he considered it his duty implicitly to obey. The noble Chifenti, ignorant what his real position had become, in consequence of his name and mission having been unfortunately mentioned in the queen's correspondence, could not be brought to acknowledge that he had gone to Sicily in *her* service, and fully determined that no word of his should compromise

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her. But when the original letters were placed before him, and when the president declared, that if he persisted in his denials, the queen herself should be seized, conveyed to Paris, and confronted with him before the tribunal. His soul sunk within him—this threat, more horrible than the certainty of his own ruin, fell on him like a thunderbolt; as soon as he had recovered the shock, he had the noble courage to reply, "Spare my sovereign from new outrages at the sacrifice of my life! I shall lay it down voluntarily to terminate this horrible proceeding. It is true that I bore to Sicily a letter from her majesty to her sister, in order to obtain a vessel to convey the queen and her children from Nice; but she never conspired against the safety of the French government, and my mission had no political object. Even if you consider the queen your captive, the criminal code does not condemn to death, either the prisoner who tries to recover his liberty, or those who assist his escape. Do what you will with me, but cease to molest the sovereign to whom I owe my loyalty and gratitude." . . . . . .

After long deliberation, the military commission condemned both these devoted men to death. This most unjust sentence was pronounced in

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conformity with an article in the penal code of 1791, the terms of which demonstrate, that such an application of it constitutes the most atrocious murder. The execution of the condemned was ordered for the following morning, at six o'clock. The brave Chifenti evinced his submission to the Divine will, in penning a letter to his family, from which I transcribe, *verbatim*, the following words—"The Almighty will deliver the queen from the perils which menace her, and will restore her to better fortune. She will remember my services, and the zeal I have evinced for her. She will compensate to you for my loss—confide in her feeling heart and generous protection." Paris, Prison de la Force, July 25th, 1811.

The fatal hour approached; the two victims were led from prison, and conducted in a carriage attended by a strong guard of cavalry to the Plaine de Grenelle, to be shot! At the last moment a horsemen galloped up. It was a page of Napoleon's, who placed in the officer's hands an order to this effect—"In the name of the Emperor, the sentence of Sassi della Tossa is suspended. The captain will execute Chifenti, oblige Sassi to witness his death, and then reconduct him to prison." The fatal discharge immediately

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followed, under the eyes of him to whom the boon of life was accorded on terms too cruel for him to bear. The Marchese Sassi returned to his prison, where a few nights after he breathed his last. The springs of life were dried up. The same shot proved fatal to both! Thus, the two victims expiated their devotedness and loyalty to an independent princess, with whom Napoleon had no possible right to interfere, and over whom he exercised the most unjustifiable tyranny, for merely wishing to change her residence, and remove to England, where his own brother, Lucien, was at that moment hospitably received and an honoured guest.

We must now return to the unhappy queen, whom we left a close prisoner in a monastery near the Quirinal, lodged in an apartment looking on the interior court, and forbidden to approach any window from which she could be seen from without, and prohibited from holding converse with any one, or from writing even to her son. The only circumstance related in her own memoir, which interrupted the monotony of her captivity was, her jewels* having been taken from

* These were nearly all restored afterwards.

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her a month after her arrival, by Janet, the treasurer of Rome, and a small pension being assigned for her expenses. It must have been more immediately after her incarceration, that a remarkable circumstance occurred which doubtless awed and afflicted her majesty, though it does not appear in the memoir before me, that having been drawn up in 1814, for the purpose of being laid before the English government. It was, I believe, a night or two after the queen's arrival at the convent, that she was restless and ruminating on her pillow, on the probable fate of those whom she knew to be in the fangs of her too powerful persecutor. Her reflections, and probably her intercessions for them, were interrupted by perceiving a person moving in the corridor, that divided her cell from her daughter's, which was at the other end. The doors of both had been left open to admit air, in consequence of the extreme heat. The queen at once recognised her faithful Sassi, passing slowly and heavily up and down between the two chambers; at first she tried to persuade herself there was some optical delusion, but the moon shone and the figure was there, and she plainly saw her devoted major domo, who continued, like the vision we see in sleep to haunt her during the whole night. The

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royal captive might have persuaded herself afterwards, that the apparition had been no more than a fancy, and that the terror she had experienced, and the indisposition which followed, had been only the results of a decayed system of nerves, shaken by years of suffering; but her first communication with her daughter in the morning, brought an astounding corroboration communicated by their attendant, who stated that the princess also had been disturbed during the night, by a person parading the corridor, whom she had recognised to be Sassi, wondering how he had been permitted to follow them to the monastery. Her royal highness was then a child of nine years old, too young to be nervous, and too intelligent to be doubted. She had told the servant how she had lost her rest just before. Her majesty had made the same communication. The coincidence seemed so extraordinary, that the date was marked down, and it proved to be the identical night on which the poor Marchese Sassi, the victim of his zealous attachment to his sovereign, had died in the Temple after witnessing the execution of his fellow prisoner. I give you this most remarkable occurrence as it was related to us, by lips whose truth cannot err. We heard it under circumstances which gave impressive solemnity to the

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hour—it was one of heart-rending grief, mutually felt and never to be forgotten! It is impossible to reason upon a supernatural appearance, but we can deeply sympathize with the afflicted lady, whether the apparition were real or imagined. The state of mental anguish which called up such a vision, proves how deeply she felt, amidst her own griefs, for those whom devotedness to her service had involved in ruin!

The following year, in July, 1812, the ex-King and Queen of Spain arrived in Rome with their grandson, the present Duke of Lucca. His fond mother hailed this event as the finale of her woes; but she was not liberated, or permitted to see them, or hold any communication with them oftener than once a month, and in the presence of General Miollis. In allusion to these visits, the queen says, "I was not allowed to embrace my son but once, or even to look at him, except at a distance. My family were always obliged to leave me in a quarter of an hour, or twenty minutes at most, and that is all the indulgence I was permitted. I remained in this sad durance another year and a half, prohibited all communication with the world, and forbidden to leave my chamber if a stranger were visiting the convent, until the prioress had notified to me that they were

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gone. General Miollis came only too often, not only to fulfil his unworthy office of jailer, but to embitter by his sardonic laugh and insolent discourse, my deplorable situation. During the latter months, my health suffered so cruelly, that I was confined to bed. The physicians, and even the prioress herself, wrote urgently to Paris to obtain, if not my liberation, at least liberty sufficient to allow me to take exercise: but no answer was returned to their pressing expostulations. Perhaps nothing would have been more agreeable to the tyrant of France, than to hear he was rid of another Bourbon; and the triumph would have inevitably been his, had my imprisonment lasted much longer. But the Almighty, who watches over the widow and the orphan, soon opened to me new hopes."

In fact, her persecutor had run his career, and the hour of reckoning was nearly come. Murat, the King of Naples, profiting by the great political events of 1814, had, in January, entered into an alliance with the powers then leaguing against France, and Neapolitan troops immediately invested Rome in their name. At this juncture General Miollis used all his efforts to engage the King and Queen of Spain to shut themselves up in the castle of St. Angelo with him.

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"Quant à moi," continues the queen, "he threatened to send me to Civita Vecchia, for what purpose it is impossible to say. However, on the 14th of January, very unexpectedly, a strong Neapolitan guard was sent to the convent, and the following day, General Pignatelli waited on me, to say he had judged it his duty to place a guard of honor at my disposal. On the 17th the dynasty was changed, and the new governor, M. de le Vauguyon came to announce to me that I was free. I replied that I should only avail myself of my liberty to take air and exercise, until my affairs were arranged—I should then seek a residence with my son. Notwithstanding this declaration, General Pignatelli came again on the following day, when I was going to dinner, to announce that I should remove to the palace of the king, my father, where I had the joy of again seeing my son, and embracing my parents. Such is my disastrous history succintly narrated, which, if fully detailed, would fill volumes."

In April, 1814, the queen removed with her children and suite to Palazzo Ercolano, in the Piazza de Venegia, where she was allowed a pension of 10,000 francs a month, by Murat's order, till her rights were established. The Spanish ambassador was charged to plead her majesty's

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cause before the congress, but he fulfilled his mission with so little zeal, that no justice was done her. It was first signified to her by the Austrian minister at Rome, that the holy alliance had decided to give her Romagna, or that part of Italy now denominated the Legations of Bologna, Farrara, and Ravenna, with that rich tract of country running along the Adriatic, and peopled by the finest race in Italy.* However, the queen said "No—give the Empress Maria Louisa Romagna—give me my son's legitimate inheritance and birth-right—our own Parma and Piacenza." But these were already allotted to the wife of Napoleon, and no hopes were given to her majesty of affecting the exchange, nor would she, through delicacy to the Pope, accept a state which once appertained to the ecclesiastical dominions. Cardinal Gonsalvi, aware of her pious scruples, lost no time in claiming it for his holiness! and nothing was left for the queen except this little

* The resolute spirit, energy, and intelligence of the Romagnole, is most striking to English travellers. I remember our first observing it in the children about the streets, five bold boys, full of activity and animation, looking as if they had just broke loose from an English public school. How happy would that people have been, if formed into an independent state, with a sovereign of their own, and how much might have been done for them and with them.

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duchy of Lucca—a gem in itself of the brightest water, but diminutive in comparison to what she had lost. For three years she continued to refuse Lucca, and never consented to leave Rome, till the powers, who cut and carved the destinies of the world, agreed, in Paris, in 1817, that at the death of Maria Louisa, Parma, Piacenza, and Guastalla, with their rich domains and population of two millions, should revert to the queen and her son, and that a compensation should be allowed them till that took place, of half a million francs per annum. But Lucca is to be added to Tuscany, when the larger territory comes to its lawful sovereign. On those terms her majesty consented that the little Duchy, till then administered provisionally by an Austrian governor, should be taken possession of in her name; and in the month of December, the queen arrived and assumed the reins of government. She was then only in her thirty-sixth year, worn in constitution, and suffering in health, through unmerited persecutions. Even thus, the mind was still lofty and capable of noble enterprizes, and those who knew her, deplored she had not a larger dominion, wherein to exercise her extensive plans and improvements. The first happiness here must have been to see the young duke united, in his

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twentieth year, to a lovely and amiable princess of the house of Savoy, daughter of Victor Emanuel, King of Sardinia. The bride of this auspicious marriage was received at Via-reggio, where the wedding fêtes took place. The queen was partial to the little marine city, and amongst her plans for aggrandizing the duchy, was one of making it a free port, to induce the Lombard merchants to trade there, instead of going to Leghorn. With this intent she ordered the fine road, which leads from the baths to the Modena frontier, to be constructed, but her plans were never followed up by the neighbouring state. She built two ships of war also, but they were obliged to shelter in the Gulf of Spezzia from every storm, and keep out to sea for want of deep water in their own port. This shows how much the queen's views were beyond the power and limits of her state. She was frequently obliged to seek a milder climate for her shattered health, in Rome, where she still retained her palace in the Piazza de Venegia. I remember the duke telling us, of his royal mother having a predilection for the poor *Piferini*, who come annually from the mountains of the Abbruzzi, with their conical hats, sheep-skin garments, and bag-pipes, to play and sing the *novena*, or Christmas hymns, for nine days, at the

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shrine of every Madonna in Rome. On one occasion, her majesty ordered her maitre d'hotel to call some of them, wishing to give them a gratuity. They are each attended by a little urchin of a boy, who wears the same picturesque costume, and plays a squeaking pipe, or sings alternately, while his droning companion accompanies him. The queen's attendant was determined not to obey by halves—he sent out his royal mistress's mandate, and they came in pairs, great and small, at the same time, to the number of two hundred and twenty! and all played their best and loudest chaunts—every pair had their own tune and their own key. "The din was maddening," said his royal highness, "for his part, he stopped his ears and ran away," but the queen, good humouredly enjoyed it, and gave each man and boy a crown piece to make him happy. This is the only anecdote I remember, which has any thing lively in it. The duke rarely speaks of his mother, except in sadness, remembering all she suffered for him. I am assured, that where she governed, she was much beloved. She required a morality as strict as her own, in all around her—alluding to the calumny of the Spanish diplomatist, the Cavaliere Chifenti, the son of him who was executed, to whom I am indebted for much of this detail as-

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sured me with all the energy and warmth for which he is distinguished, that he could not have believed her majesty capable of a levity, even had he seen it. As a beautiful instance of her prudence, and a correctness of conduct which would not even be suspected, he told me, that after the King of Etruria's death, when her duties were arduous, she felt entire confidence in the counsel and assistance of a highly respected nobleman, advanced in years, and I believe, a Spaniard, who had been her husband's friend. The favour she could not avoid showing him as her minister, excited jealousy at Florence, and she perceived that even the great disparity of their years did not save her from calumny. She immediately imparted to the King of Spain, her father, her wish that he would require this minister's recal. You may imagine how interesting it has been to hear these details, from the estimable son of a martyred father, the martyr to generous feeling and devotedness! The Cavalier Chifenti was for years the queen's secretary, and what could be done, to compensate his bereaved family has not been neglected.

Her majesty was deeply impressed by religion, and I trust, enjoyed its consolations. After eight years reign, her worn out constitution gave way

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in 1824. She removed to Rome with her family, whose tender care was aided to the utmost by a whole conclave of physicians, who sat weekly on her case, but the powers of nature were ebbing too fast to be arrested, and the faithful attendant on whose shoulder her head rested, at the awful close which took place suddenly in the night bears testimony of her patient uncomplaining submission.

I feel assured you have mourned with heart-felt sympathy over this august princess' life of trial, and shuddered at the vicissitudes to which, without apparent personal ambition, she became exposed. Her highly gifted son was her successor in the Duchy of Lucca, where he has taken such deep root in the hearts of his subjects, that they will reluctantly part, when his own more ample territory of Parma becomes vacant. His royal highness has been a considerable sufferer, by the protracted civil war in Spain, which has for many years deprived him of a very important source of revenue, that of his Spanish commendaries, and interfered with many happy plans and prospects.

There are two subjects continually recurring in Italy, which I have, for various reasons, interdicted to my pen—discussion on the religion of

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Rome, and allusions to the state of political feeling throughout the country. We could not occupy ourselves with either to any good purpose, but I feel myself at full liberty to relate a rare occurrence which took place at Lucca, the year before our first acquaintance with the little duchy, because it is now purely historical.

The political movement which vibrated through Italy in 1831, was also felt at Lucca. The duke was then at Vienna. His near family connection with the late Emperor of Austria, and the duchess's sister having married the reigning sovereign, then King of Hungary, naturally drew the royal family of Lucca frequently to the emperor's court. The disturbance was sufficiently serious to send some to prison, and many more into voluntary exile. The government of Lucca, wishing examples to be made amongst the delinquents before his return, dispatched to the duke a list of their names, advising him to sign their condemnation. His royal highness left Vienna for Italy immediately, and some symptoms of agitation appearing in the duchy, the ministers sent an express to meet him at Massa, advising his not proceeding further ; but the duke loved his subjects, and feared them not. He hastened forward to his palace at Marlia, and instead of

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pronouncing sentence on the accused, he granted, with all his heart, a general amnesty, which opened the prison doors, and recalled all who had fled! He entered Lucca the following day, and met a reception which may be imagined but cannot be described. There had not been such a triumph since the days of Castruccio. Returning at nightfall to Marlia, the whole population came forth with torches to draw his carriage along the road. I have heard that the principal offenders, having followed their sovereign to express their gratitude, were invited to a dinner, which had been hastily prepared, and those who had sinned most, were thus taught to love most, by being beneficently received and graciously forgiven. I have no means at hand of verifying this anecdote, but it is highly characteristic.* It may be safely

* The account I have ventured to give of the amnesty is, as I heard it detailed, the year after its occurrence, by a Lucchese, who gloried in the event. Since dispatching the above letter to my friend, the story has been told in such a variety of ways, that I feel, like Sir Walter Raleigh, who was deterred from continuing his history, when confined in the Tower, by finding it impossible to ascertain the facts of a quarrel which took place under his window, and even beneath his eye, every one detailing the circumstances differently. However, though some say the amnesty was dispatched from Vienna, others from Massa, and more from Marlia, all agree that it was the act of a hero, and that the reception of their magnanimous prince was as glorious as it deserved to be; that those who

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foretold, that Charles Lewis, Duke of Lucca, will never have an insurrection to quell, or a revolution to deprecate. We were at Florence at the time, and I remember well the sensation the news created, and in the impotent rage of a certain ambassador, who went foaming to the palace, asking "what was to be done?" Rumour reported that he only received a phlegmatic answer, implying that "what was done could not be undone," possibly from one who knows too well how to be noble and generous not to appreciate the magnanimity of a deed, which melted all hearts, from Sicily to the Alps, and comforted many a drooping exile with joyous expectation, that so glorious an example might be generally followed. Many hopes were, I believe, also raised amongst the malcontents, that the prince, who was capable of pardoning, would also aid their cause; and had the duke been ambitious, and disposed to listen to them, much commotion, at least, would have ensued; but his royal highness, the descendant of Charlemagne and a line of fifty kings, is a strict legitimist, and would never lend himself to

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drew the royal carriage had a good supper provided for them, and that for every delinquent some government employment has since been found.

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party for personal aggrandizement. Such was the enthusiasm he excited, that he was hailed wherever he appeared, for some time, as King of Italy, and the whole of the new Lucchese coinage, bearing his effigy, was entirely bought up by the jewellers of the surrounding states, and set in pins, brooches, shirts, and even coat buttons. They were also mounted on the tops of walking-sticks and snuff-boxes, and worn, *con amore*, throughout the country, even beneath the eyes and threats of those who jealously and suspiciously regarded such fervent devotion.

Lucca now flourishes under the mild sway of this illustrious prince and his lovely consort, on whose graciousness and urbanity I shall find frequent occasion to dwell in the course of our correspondence, rather than attempt their *éloge* in this protracted letter; besides, the duke is now known in England, and his royal highness speaks of our country with all the enthusiasm our *amor patriæ* could desire. By-the-bye, while there, he sent for his principal architect, wishing him to observe, I believe, the interior arrangements and manner of heating our comfortable houses: but the people of the duchy decided that Signor Notolini's services could only be required for one purpose, and reported that he had gone

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to *construct a bridge across the Channel*, that their beloved sovereign might return to them without suffering the inconveniences of a sea voyage, which they know he abhors. I believe we had the pleasure of being the first to tell his royal highness this *naive* anecdote of his attached subjects, and of making him laugh heartily, in return for the too dramatic detail he gave us of his sea voyages, going to England and coming back again.

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LETTER X.

Villa Brodrick.

It would be injustice to the little duchy, whose beauties and advantages I have so much pleasure in describing, not to give you some account of its port—Viareggio. It is situated on that beautiful coast between Leghorn and Spezzia, along which the Apennines raise their snowy peaks, forming a back ground of the most sublime mountain scenery. The fine road to Viareggio passes over the last acclivity of the range, at a distance of only five miles from Lucca, and is so steep as to require oxen to assist in drawing up travelling carriages. The sea once laved the foot of the mountain, but it has retired four miles, and left an unwholesome morass, which must be passed to reach the port. The road was of dif-

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ficult construction, for want of a solid foundation. It was one of the noble works of Castruccio.

In the last century Viareggio was a little hamlet of fishermen's huts, with a sickly population of three hundred souls. Some judicious hydraulic works having corrected the climate, the population now amounts to above 6,000; there are 1,132 families, 700 of whom are those of the sailors.

The little port boasts 150 vessels; 35 are fishing craft, which bring in to the value of above £5,000 sterling, annually. The commerce now extends to Africa and the Levant—oil is exported, and corn imported. Vessels do not exceed eighty tons, for want of deeper water, but the anchorage is good, and a commodious canal carries them into a safe dock.

The country immediately round the town is cultivated and healthful, that beyond is now laid down in rice grounds. A pine forest skirts along the coast, and affords an agreeable drive.

The late Queen of Etruria, during her short reign at Lucca, accomplished some noble public works, and planned others more extensive. I believe it was with the desire of transporting the seat of government to the more healthful seashore, that she commenced a splendid palace at

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Viareggio; the foundations were laid, and the walls of the first story, in part, raised, but only one wing has ever been roofed in, and that is sufficiently extensive to afford ample space for the Casino, or public rooms, with a large *caffée* below, and a suite of apartments above for the governor, the Marchese Alfonso Cittadella, to whom all the recent improvements are to be attributed. The town of Viareggio has also been laid out in wide streets and large squares, of which only a tenth part has been built. A few older palaces of the Lucchese nobles form a contrast to the modern plaistered tenements now inhabited by the poor population. A kind of esplanade, composed of better houses, faces the sea, to accommodate families who go there in summer for bathing. Temporary baths are constructed at the water's edge, with dressing rooms, and the usual conveniences for baths. Many Italians resort there, and it would be a most enjoyable place if the sands were solid; but a tideless shore never hardens, and there is no walk except on the mole, even so, the sea is never monotonous, and there is a charm in watching the graceful fishing vessels which go out in pairs, drawing their nets between them, and looking like beautiful aquatic birds, skimming the blue surface of the wave insepar-

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ably. I have reckoned as many as thirty sail of these fishing craft, skirting the horizon during the morning, and returning in the evening, to sail again after midnight. Nothing can exceed the beauty of the sun-sets on this western coast; we have also "gazed on Dian's wave reflected sphere" again and again, from the mole, with the most pleasurable sensations.

The first winter we passed in the duchy of Lucca, was at Viareggio. The peerless duchess had interested herself most humanely about my shattered health, and persuaded me to try homeopathy, under the care of her German physician, Baron Necker. Her royal highness recommended our removing there when the court went to Stiava, a villa within four miles of the sea, in a little amphitheatre of hills, protecting it to the north and east. There the duke used, at that period, to pass the winter months, dividing his time between study and the active bodily exercise which his health requires. All that winter, he was at his books before day, and Colonel Stisted has found him at one o'clock still immersed in study, with a dozen works of reference in various languages, open before him—he is quite a polyglot. In the evenings, his royal highness frequently made us supremely happy by coming to our fire-

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side at Viareggio, where his presence never failed to spread joy and satisfaction. Amongst his suite, which was numerous enough to fill an omnibus, there was an interesting youth, Theodore Döhler, who had been in the duke's household from childhood—he was then scarcely sixteen. His reputation as a pianist is now European. He was even then a exquisite player, and,

> "Just at that age, 'twixt boy and youth,
> When thought is speech, and speech is truth."

His talent gave a great charm to those evenings. His royal highness knows and loves music well—he has an excellent voice, and the good taste to prefer Handel to all other composers. It was always a great indulgence when he used to bring his young protegé to play or accompany. Pacini, the composer, used also to come and enliven the evening with some humourous buffo, after the more solemn strain of choral harmony was over.

It was the winter after my mother joined us, and her benign presence hallowed our social hearth. The duke fully appreciates her matchless qualities; he had just then ordered a portrait of her for his study, which is placed on his escrutoire. In February, the duchess removed to Stiava to avoid the noise of the carnival at Lucca,

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and graciously came again and again to see us. Her appearance was not then impaired by suffering health, though she was always beautiful, more so than any one we have known abroad. It is only in our own fair isles are seen such combinations of dignity and sweetness. The grave expression of her large dark orbs, and of her fair expansive polished brow, is softened by a dimple, whose charm no art could imitate—no pen describe, and animated by the eloquent blood which, ever and anon, suffuses the habitual "saintly paleness" of her cheek. Withal, "there seems to dwell, in the strong beauties of her countenance, something that is not earthly!" Her royal highness's manners partake of the same character of dignity and gentleness. You never forget she is a sovereign, and of a long line of royal ancestry. But you are always at ease, and perfectly happy in her presence. Her conversation is highly interesting, and very animated, though deeply tinctured with piety, which is the abiding principal of her life—I believe she may be said to live in prayer. There are two or three amiable devoted ladies of her household, who are in attendance by turns. She never goes out but for an airing, and sometimes on horseback. One day we went to see her, for she graciously allows

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us the entrée, we found her royal highness receiving a visit from a nice little elderly person, whom she told us had been Prince Ferdinand's nurse, and had come a long way to see her. "She is good," she said—"all about me are good." The conversation that day happened to turn chiefly on royal personages. Her delineations were candid, and she seemed to feel abundant sympathy for those whose position renders them liable to be deceived.

Though not literary, and living almost as secluded as those beautiful beings we read of in eastern story, the duchess has considerable knowledge of character, and her natural acumen is tempered with more indulgence in judging of others, than is usually found in one so firm and decided. She never allows herself to be warped by the opinions of the self-interested—she encourages no reporters, and always judges for herself. It was most interesting to hear her speak of her sisters. "We are four," she said, "and we are one." She then alluded to having been a twin with the Empress of Austria, and added, "We were so alike, that my mother never knew us in infancy, one from the other, till a pink ribbon was tied round my arm." Yet her life has been rarely what the world calls *couleur de rose*.

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for being a twin, probably, has involved a delicacy of constitution, which, combined with much seriousness of character, induces a life of great retirement. Few strangers have enjoyed the privilege granted to us, of seeing and conversing with her, and to her sympathy, are we solely indebted for the happiness. Her royal highness is enthusiastic about homeopathy, and enjoins strict obedience to its rules. One day, after dinner, I was in earnest conversation with her, when coffee was handed round, and quite forgetting the *régime*, I took some; I was not aware what I had done, till I felt the cup taken gently out of my hand, with a still gentler reproof.

Her royal highness is rarely sufficiently well to hold a court, and never comes here except to pass a day occasionally with the duke, during the two or three months he usually gives to the baths, for she finds the air too exciting, but his royal highness returns to Marlia, at least twice a week, to see her. She knows the sound of his carriage from afar, exclaims, "Ecco Carlo," and forgetting how delicate she is, often runs out into the portico to meet him. It is then the colour rises, and beautifully lights up her countenance. Even mentioning his name produces the same magic effect. The old courtiers are eloquent in describ-

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ing how handsome they both were on their marriage, and how they loved!

Once the duchess gave a splendid fête in the beautiful palace at Lucca, in honour of the duke's sister, the Princess of Saxony. I remember little about it now, except the transcendant beauty of the former. Her dress was pure white, for the court was in second mourning for Charles X.; a light gossamer turban supported, I know not how, a quantity of brilliants wound round and round its folds, with large diamond tassels, necklace, and ear-rings. Her tall ethereal figure looked a perfect constellation, as she moved amongst her guests.

Her royal highness's jewels are some of the finest in Europe, and descended from various branches of the royal trees to which the houses of Bourbon and Savoy belong. By-the-bye, the Cardinal of York, in remembrance of much fraternal kindness, bequeathed the British dominions (his fancied right and title at least), to Victor Emanuel IV., King of Sardinia, the duchess's father. I remember a gallant Highlander addressing her royal highness as a princess of Scotland, and then tracing for me her descent from Charles I., whose daughter, Henrietta Mary, married a duke of Orleans, and their

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daughter, Anna Maria, was united in 1684 to Victor Amadeo II., of Sardinia, to whom Victor Emanuel was fourth in descent.

The villa at Stiava is beautifully situated, but very small. To avoid anticipating dinner by the olfactory nerves, which is inevitable in a diminutive mansion, and to insure a more ample refectory, the duke banished his *batterie de cuisine* to Conca, a lodge a mile up the mountain, and regularly earned an appetite, in those days, by scrambling up there to breakfast and dinner. It was fine discipline for health, and to encourage the practice, the amiable duchess, during his absence at Vienna, had his rural dining hall, at Conca, beautifully painted and furnished, to give him a pleasant surprise on his return.

His royal highness's next birth-day was accordingly kept at the lodge in the mountains.

A little castellated town, a few miles off, Camajore, which had played its part gallantly in the civil wars, and had still strong walls to boast, had long been memorializing and supplicating the sovereign to be advanced to the dignity and privileges of a city. "Viareggio, without walls or ancient renown, had civic honors to dispense, why should not Camajore?" The place is so small, and now so insignificant, that the duke had always

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smiled at their pretensions, and waived their claims, reluctant to impose unnecessary expenditure on the state. However, there were too many persons interested in sharing the municipal emoluments to let the subject drop. One wanted to be governor, another chancellor, and another gonfaloniere, or mayor, besides some twenty more expecting subordinate offices. The duke was inexorable—the duchess was assailed—and, above all days in the year, on her consort's birth-day! Her royal highness never interferes in government decrees, but how could she refuse so small a boon on such a day? Dinner commenced—the feast was joyous. When persons are happy and merry themselves, they naturally wish to dispense happiness and mirth to others. An old courtier gave a hint, that Camajore alone, of all the country round, was sad; "hope long deferred, making the heart sick." The duke was deaf—at length the duchess spoke—his heart has always ears for her, and he was in buoyant spirits. By his side stood his favourite dog, a splendid animal. Brillante, he knew, had just been gorged by a large plateful, from the royal board, and Brillante was notorious for never eating bread, so, in a moment of frolic, thinking he was sure to win, his royal highness resolved to set the fate of Camajore on a

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cast, and throwing the dog a large roll, he said, "If Brillante devours this, Camajore shall be a city." The capricious and capacious jaws opened —the teeth did their work—the bread went down—absolutely down, and Camajore was a city!!!

I believe the duke was sorry, but his word was passed. The duchess and Princess Charlotte soon twined the ornamental flowers of the table into a garland, crowned Brillante, and led him to his royal master, amidst cheers and vivas.

The propitious dog was next morning taken to Camajore and paraded about the new city, amidst a rejoicing population, who were ready to worship him, promised to introduce a dog and a loaf of bread into the city arms, over the gate, that Brillante's fame might descend to posterity.

The duke possesses rare powers of repartée. Long before we knew him, the following anecdote was told us by the President Buonarroti of Florence.

The court of France, in Charles X.'s time, used to be jealous of his preferring Vienna to Paris. Dining one day in Rome, with the French Ambassador, the Duke de Montmorency asked his royal highness where he proposed wintering? The prince replied, "in Germany."

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" C'est une bêtise," retorted the minister, forgetting himself. " Monseigneur," answered the duke, " C'est plus pardonnable d'en faire a mon age, que d'en dire au votre." Could he have given a more dignified reproof ?

For the last three or four years the duchess has preferred passing the winter months at a larger villa called the Pianore, near the newly made city of Camajore, where there is shelter from the north winds, and that mildness of climate generally enjoyed on a western coast. Stiava and Conca are in consequence deserted by the duke, who passes all the time he can spare from the administration of affairs at the Pianore, anxiously watching over his beloved consort's health, which, I am grieved to say, has been declining the last year.

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LETTER XI.

Villa Broderick.

THERE is one commodious and elegant marine villa at Viareggio; it is quite at the end of the Esplanade, and was erected by Princess Borghese, as a retreat from the world, after Napoleon's fall; there she lived much, and formed the project of following her brother to St. Helena. She was three years supplicating before permission could be obtained from the allied powers. At length it came—she prepared to go, and was on the point of departing, when the news of Napoleon's death arrested her movements, and plunged her into the deepest sorrow. Amongst some eighteen or twenty interesting autographs we possess of the Buonaparte family, is a letter addressed by General Bertrand to Princess Bor-

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ghese,* after the emperor's death, which alludes warmly to her kindness to him. It appears she followed him to Elba also, and to the utmost tried to console him in adversity, when neglected and forgotten even by the wife of his bosom, who, I am assured, never even once wrote to him in his exile.

The Princess Borghese, though a spoiled beauty, and by all accounts rendered ridiculous in her hours of ease by the most consummate coquetry, seems to have had some redeeming points in her character. She was passing fair, and the symmetry of her form was perfect. Remembering a

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Londres, ce 22 Août., 1821.

* MADAME.—Je profite du retour de M L'Abbé Vigiali pour vous renouveller mon respectueux hommage. Au moment où vous vous disposiez à partir pour Ste Helene, vous avez été arretè par la nouvelle de la perte que nous avons faites. L'Empereur l'aimait à l'entretenir de sa sœur Pauline, de sa touchante amitié dont elle lui avait donné des preuves dans sa fortune comme dans son malheur à l'isle d'Elbe. Vous avez eu, jusqu'à ses derniers moments, une grande part à ses affections.

Permettez moi d'offrir, ici an Cardinal Fesch, à la Reine Caroline, aux Princes, vos frères, l'hommage de mon respect. La santé de ma femme est dans un bien mauvais état; je crains qu'elle en puisse se retablis. Elle espère que vous lui conservez votre bienveillant inverêt.

Veuillez agéer, Madame, les sentiments de respect avec les quels j'ai l'honneur d'etre,

De votre Altesse,
le tres humble et
tres obeissant serviteur,
BERTRAND.

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model of Princess Borghese's very beautiful foot, which occupied a glass-case in our old friend Baron Denon's dormitory ; we had the curiosity to inquire, at Viareggio, if any one had thought of preserving her *petit sabot* as a relic. We were soon brought not only a shoe, eight inches long, but a lock of her raven hair, and a beautiful little pair of ear-rings, composed of Fer-de-Berlin and gold, with relievo heads—they looked as if they had been made for the lilliputian queen of beauty.

Amongst those who followed Princess Borghese to Viareggio, from Rome, was the Pacini family ; the elder son, the composer, had been her protegé from a boy, and his music was often a solace to her in misfortune. We found him at Viareggio, director of the royal lyceum of music, an institution of his own forming, and which does him infinite honour. We were permitted to accompany the duke to hear the pupils sing choruses at sight. The Cavalier Pacini stood in the midst, with a wand in each hand, beneath a large black board, on which were drawn in white, two musical staves, in different clefs. A group of young pupils were at each side, while the professor, looking like a magician, had only to touch the line or space with his wands, and move them up and down to call forth a strain of fine har-

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mony—the movement was rapid, and the effect marvellous. No written music was requisite, either for master or pupils. How I wish the art had been taught thus in our young days.

There were a thousand children under nine years of age at Viareggio, and not a school, I grieve to say, in the place; yet were the poor things so apt to learn, that the whole juvenile population had become infected by the melomania, and we used to see the little ragged urchins, in the streets, forming mimic bands, imitating various instruments with their young voices, the tallest acting as leader, and producing such pretty music that they often called down a shower of sous on their head from our balcony. The amiable Marchesa Cittadella was, even then, trying to raise an infant school, but it is only now that there is any prospect of success. The Cavaliere Pacini's establishment was an important blessing, but he sacrificed his fortune to promoting and extending it. The lyceum is now removed to Lucca.

On the Princess Borghese's death, the marine villa was bequeathed to her sister Caroline, widow of Murat. This unhappy lady reigned six years at Naples, where her humanity and good sense tempered the iron hand of her handsome,

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but too often tyrannical consort. Her intercession, even on her knees, to save life, is, I am assured, remembered with tears by many who had reason to bless her name; nor was the crown, even to herself, without its thorns. When Napoleon fell, and Murat was executed for having returned, and landed on the coast of Calabria without quarantine, a law of his own making, his widow and children were already in the hands of the Austrians, who had compelled them to leave Naples and to settle in Germany, under government surveillance. There the ex-queen was constrained to dispose of her jewels, and of every other valuable, even to her shawls, and to lay out all her disposable money on the purchase of estates, in a remote province, where she was, in a degree, a state prisoner, and buried for ten years. When her two sons grew up they naturally panted for freedom, and went to America; her daughters married Italian noblemen. Bereft of her children, Madame Murat was less to be feared; she was then permitted, on the plea of health, to leave an uncongenial climate, and settle at Trieste. It was soon after her removal there, that her mother, Madame Letizia, met with that fearful accident in Rome, which confined her to bed for the rest of her life. On the first alarm of an

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injury, which threatened to prove fatal, the affectionate daughter hurried southward to behold once more her venerable, and perhaps dying parent. Austria could not refuse a passport on such an occasion, but the police at Rome had the cruelty to deny her permission to remain near the sufferer, and she was forced back to Trieste within two days, a journey of several hundred miles. A pique against Murat was the excuse for persecuting his widow. The more humane Tuscan government, in compassion to her declining health, assented, soon after, to her supplications, to be permitted to remove to Florence, where she fitted up a large and commodious palace, and finally settled, under the title of Countess *Lipona*, a transposition of *Napoli*. While at Trieste, she had formed a friendship with the family of our excellent consul-general, the late William Taylor Money, who highly appreciated Madame Lipona's estimable qualities of head and heart, and were much esteemed and beloved by her; she called them "La Sainte Famille." In compliment to these valued friends, the ex-queen gave us a most gracious reception at Florence, and we had many opportunities of enjoying her society. It was the following year, 1832, when we had removed to a villa, that we met her one day at the door of an

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exhibition of modern paintings ; she had gone there, it appeared, merely to see a family portrait, and I was struck with a great change in her appearance—she looked grief-worn, and twenty years older. I could not help asking, with some earnestness, if she had been ill ? She pressed my hand, and said with emotion, " Don't you know that we have lost all now, even him on whom our last hopes rested." It was to the Duke de Reichstadt, the young Napoleon, she alluded ! I knew that that fine young man, who entered life with so much promise, had been for some months declining in a consumption, but I was not aware that he was dead. After a few words drawn from the source of all human consolation, I ventured to propose her coming to pass a quiet day with us in the country, saying we should be alone, and she should bring her own party, to which she at once assented. Our villa was three miles from Florence, finely situated on a rising ground over the Arno, and surrounded with vineyards. It was the first day the grapes were ripe, and they looked so beautiful, that when the gardiner brought in his offering of first fruits, I was seized with the fancy of having them hung in clusters and festoons around two graceful Hebes, half the size of life, which stood in the hall, and

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placing the statues in the centre of the dinner table. The villa afforded no plateau, and one travelling plate chest you may imagine contained no epergne, therefore, I was glad to find a substitute of some kind. I was pleased also to find something out of the common way to amuse our poor mourner, who was charmed with the expedient; indeed, the rich purple, green, and amber clusters of grapes, with their verdant foliage and tendrils, contrasted by the white marble, produced the prettiest effect; and the smiling Hebes, leaning forward with their ewers and cups, seemed to invite the little party, to quaff the sparkling nectar, and forget their cares.

Our interesting guest came, attended by General Macdonald, her chamberlain, the faithful devoted subject and servant, who had sacrified his own ambition and interests in life to attend his mistress in her adversity, as he had done in her prosperity. He was a fine, noble, dignified old soldier—admired, and highly respected by all who knew him. Countess Lipona was also attended by her dame de compagnie, an agreeable young French woman, and our mutual friend Count Carletti. She cheered up at dinner, and amused us highly by talking Neapolitan, in the true Lazzaroni style, to our bluff coachman, a Sarrentine,

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who claimed the privilege of standing behind her chair, because he had been her subject. Madame Lipona was affable in society, and possessed those delightful manners which put every one at their ease, and are, I believe, only to be acquired in perfection on a throne. The conversation turning on the Neapolitan superstition of the evil eye, she amazed me by saying, our revered old friend, the Archbishop of Taranto, believed in it. As a proof, she assured me, that when he was minister of the interior of Naples, she often wondered what he was shuffling under his hat during the court audiences and receptions. She at last had the curiosity to ask him what he was about, which called forth the acknowledgment, that he was making horns with his fingers at some one he suspected, amongst the corps diplomatique, of having the evil eye !!! The dear old man never failed afterwards, when there were foreign ambassadors and new arrivals, to be introduced to say, sotto voce, "Maesta fate i corni," literally, "point your fingers at them, there is an evil eye amongst them."

It is an extraordinary fact, that the most enlightened Neapolitan, instead of rejecting the charge of believing in this barbarous superstition, always pours out a torrent of stories in confirma-

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tion of truth, recounting accidents, which they aver to have occurred to themselves or to their friends from the evil eye, leaving one no resource but to listen and wonder. We had never fallen upon the subject of *Jettatura* with the good old archbishop, and he was so enlightened, I might almost say beyond his age and country, that he was the last I should have suspected of being subjugated by the tyrant—superstition. His former queen loved him well.

The archbishop had recently sent us his portrait, a marvellous likeness, which Madame Lipona was delighted to see.

After dinner, we went out on the terrace, where coffee was served, and our dröll Neapolitan craved permission to dance the Tarantella with his tamborine, "in honor of her majesty." He acquitted himself with a grace and solemnity which approximated the high sublime to the deep absurd. There is a passion and feeling in this national dance which is indiscribable. Francesco, though a short, thick-set John Bull, in appearance, with a florid countenance, gave the Tarantella all its expression and character, because his whole soul was in it. Countess Lipona was highly amused; she encored him again and again, and ordered her chamberlain to give him

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a purse of gold for the pleasure he had afforded her. She really seemed cheered and better. She laughed heartily when we told her of Francisco having come into the room one day with a tray of glasses, while Charlotte was playing the Tarantella, which caused him such a convulsion in his limbs, that, fearful of breaking the crystal, he exclaimed, "O Signorina, per carita, mi pizzican le gambe," literally, "Stop, for pity sake, my legs itch." The irresistable effect of the national air in Francesco,* explains why dancing the Tarantella is a reputed remedy for the bite of the spider, whose name it bears. To keep the patient awake, in fact, is the only specific, and no Neapolitan could possibly sleep while the Tarantella tingles in his ears.

A poor peasant was bitten here lately by a viper—a rare occurrence. The doctors got about

* This Neapolitan was five years in our service—his attachment seemed that of an old Irish retainer, jealous for the honour of the family. All went right, till in an evil hour, he took to selling our corn for wine! We were made aware of the fact through the good principle of a priest, and the duke's factor at Viareggio, in whose presence he was confronted with the sack, which had many a time, and oft, carried away our poor horses' provender. The unfortunate man, conscience-struck, fell senseless at our feet. Within an hour, he was *en route* for Naples, *via* Leghorn. We might have sent him to the gallies, but he had a family. It is the only instance of domestic dishonesty we have suffered from in Italy.

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him, and while the English M.D.'s burnt his throat with ammonia, the Italians walked him nearly to death, lest he should fall asleep. After he had submitted to the treatment for fifteen hours, two persons were employed to drag him along, even during the night, which a distinguished Roman physician, the Cavaliere Centamori, assured us was unnecessarily tormenting the patient. It is only the bite of the Tarantella which requires movement.

Countess Lipona received very agreeably at Florence—her palace was beautifully furnished, and full of elegant comfort. At dinner, General Macdonald presided, and she sat at the side, with the guest she wished most to honour next to her, whom she helped as each dish was presented. I remember being thus involved in partaking of one, which I should certainly otherwise have let pass. Our hostess said, "you must try the zampa di Modena; it is a present I receive every year from an adherent of my family." This appeal was irresistable. It looked more like a haggis than any thing I ever saw at the wrong side of the Tweed, and was in fact a boar's foot, stuffed to a great size with force-meat, and reclining on a bed of what we should call ground peas pudding. It is not a pretty dish, but it is in

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high repute amongst the Italian gastronomes. There was another rarity for Italy on the table that day—a pine apple; it formed the apex of a pyramid of ornamental confectionary in the centre. When the desert was handing round, Madame Lipona asked for the pine, and sent it to Charlotte to carry home. She was always the queen in her own house. It was that evening we met, for the first time, that learned and highly estimable Swedish noble, the Comte Gräberg de Hemso, and his interesting daughter, who are acquisitions to the best society at Florence. The count is honored with the charge of the grand duke's private library. There was music, and Madame Vivier, daughter of an illustrious mother, Madame Catalani, sung French romances; she has a fine voice, and has since formed a beautiful Italian style, which is more worthy of her.

Countess Lipona had once possessed a superb collection of Etruscan vases from her own excavations around Naples. She had been forced to dispose of them, with her other treasures, in Austria, and they now adorn the museum at Munich. Before she resigned them, General Macdonald, who was an accomplished artist, made fine drawings of them all, in their own colours, and we have often enjoyed looking

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them over, with his or her illustrations. Every thing, however, which had belonged personally to her husband, she had retained ; and one of the last days we were with her, she led us in silence into a cabinet, where, in a large armorie, with plate glass, she had arranged his uniforms, decorations, arms, and every relic she possessed of her departed hero, except a large cameo of his fine head, which she always wore on her arm. We were each too full of thoughts for words. She had never quite left off her mourning. Her dress was always either black velvet, gray silk, or pearl-coloured cashmere. She thus indulged in what she thought becoming her position and reverses of fortune, without making a display of feeling by the deeper garb of woe.

She was popular at Florence, her young lady acquaintances there worked her a beautiful carpet in compartments. Each square contained a basket of flowers, a group of animals, or a landscape, on a white ground, while the *fond* of the carpet was deep violet, relieved with black. Two compartments were devoted to commemorating the names of the young embroidresses, which had a pretty effect. The silk hangings of the apartment, cushions, and furniture, were also violet, and black to correspond.

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Madame Lipona had excellent taste, and a liberal hand—too liberal for her revenues. She had large claims on the French government for the Elysée Bourbon, I think, and other personal property, for which no indemnity had ever been made. In 1838 she obtained permission to repair to Paris, to plead her own cause, and, though a claimant, she received a gracious reception from a just and generous monarch. I have understood the king and queen treated her with marked attention, and redoubled their kindness when her position was rendered painful and critical, by the folly of her infatuated nephew, Prince Louis, who just at that juncture, made his lamentable attempt at Strasburgh.

Her absence was also saddened by the death of the good General Macdonald, who was prevented from accompanying her, by an attack of gout, which proved fatal. After a few months residence in Paris, Countess Lipona obtained a grant of 100,000 francs a-year for her life, out of her French property. She then returned to Italy, and immediately purchased a splendid villa, near Lucca, for her summer retreat. We were passing the winter in Rome, and looking forward with pleasure to having her near us. While indulging our love of antiquities, and *rokoko*, we found, in

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the collection of a dealer, a beautiful sword which had belonged to Murat, and had been taken out of his hand, on his landing at Calabria, just before his execution. The handle was of cut coral, set with diamonds, the jewels were gone, but there were still cameo portraits of the king, queen, and their four children, on the hilt, and on that account, probably, had been retained near his person on his last calamitous voyage.

You will be amazed to hear who had purchased and treasured the relic—it was our unfortunate Princess of Wales, who professed great admiration of the soldier king, and it was Bergami who then offered it for sale, with a quantity of valuable lace of hers, through the dealer. The latter we purchased some of, and wished greatly to have captured the sword also, to add to our friend's cabinet, but the vender demanded three hundred crowns, and prudence obliged us to content ourselves with having a coloured drawing made of it, to show Madame Lipona on our return, charging the antiquarian not to dispose of the relic till he heard from us. We were also charged with letters from her family, and looking forward to meeting her, amongst our pleasantest welcomes at home. Alas! en route, at Certaldo, the news of her death reached us while staying with the

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Marchesa Lenzoni Medici. Her malady was like Napoleon's. She enjoyed her French accession of property, with which she had hoped to have made so many happy, but six months. How the family are reduced since we knew them!

There was the Princess Charlotte Buonaparte, that interesting and highly-gifted daughter of Joseph, Compte de Survilliers, who married Napoleon, the eldest son of Louis, the ex-king of Holland. Their life, after marriage, was a romance of happiness. They were both artists—both poets; what she designed, he lithographed—what she wrote, he illustrated. I have a number of their mutual works by me, given to us by the Countess Lipona, which are full of sentiment, refined feeling, and good taste. The unfortunate commotions of 1831 interrupted, for ever, their elegant pursuits and matchless happiness. The young Napoleon was persuaded, by his even then infatuated brother, Prince Louis, to offer himself to the provisional government at Bologna, but with all possible good will towards them, the leaders of that calamitous enterprize, flattered with vain hopes of assistance from France, did not dare to give the nephews of the late emperor a command in their army. It was during the days of anxious suspense, while they were waiting the

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result of the movement at Forli, that Prince Napoleon was attacked with a malignant fever, or measles, and carried off in three days. Some attribute his death to less natural causes. All Italy mourned him, and the Princess Charlotte, a "widow indeed," had never recovered his loss. I am aware that she sought, and I trust found, consolation where it is never denied. She is now gone to join the partner of her earthly happiness in regions where the poor short-sighted ambition of this world can never again separate them!

When the Princess Charlotte was with her father in America, before her marriage, she was an object of the fondest attachment to the young Achille Murat, her cousin. Dr. Sloper, who, I understand, enjoys the family confidence, as a compensation for the persecutions his devotedness to Napoleon at St. Helena was supposed to have entailed upon him, was the person commissioned by the Compte de Survilliers, to conduct her back to Europe. She was then intended by her family for the cousin whom she afterwards married, but the young lover had made some impression on her heart, and she would have preferred him then to the noble youth with whom she found such perfect happiness afterwards, and whom she only married to gratify her family. I detail you this

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love story, in order to send you some pretty lines Prince Achille addressed to his cousin, when he met her afterwards in London, in 1832. They are, I believe, unpublished. He had married a grand-daughter of Washington's in 1827, and settled in the Floridas.

ROMANCE.

Je t'ai revue, apres huit ans d'absence
Toi dont l'aspect, faisait battre mon cœur.
Je t'ai revue, mais pour moi ta presence
N'a plus été que celle d'une sœur.

Je t'ai revue, mais de noir habillée
Toi dont la joie animait les beaux yeux
Et regardant ta prunelle mouillée
Je me suis dit: un autre fut heureux.

Tu me trahis, et rejettas le gage
De mon amour apres l'avoir reçu,
Je te hais, mais bientot ton image
Calma l'erreur de mon espoir deçu.

Oui je craignais d'une ardeur mal eteinte
De voir en moi, se rallumer les feux
Mais la tristesse en ton visage empreinte
M'ai trop fait voir, qu'un autre fut heureux.

Pour t'oublier, je donnai ma tendresse
A celle au moins qui sut la mériter,
Je fuis aimé, mais long temps par faiblesse
Ton souvenir ma fallut éviter.

Dans les deserts, et loin de ma patrie
Je réussis, à former d'autre nœuds,
Je suis aimé, et je crois pour la vie,
Que je puis dire aussi: je suis heureux.

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Mais maintenant que pour toute vengeance
De l'abandon que tu me fis subir,
Je puis te voir avec indifférence
De ton malheur, je commence a souffrir.

Ainsi, d'un mortel, la perte je deplore
Il fut aimé ; il etait genereux
Je lui pardonne, et s'il vivait encore
Je vous dirais ; amis soyez heureux.

Londres, 21 Decembre, 1832.

A great mortality has attended the Buonaparte family. The most distinguished members now living are amongst the sons of the late Prince of Canino. Prince Charles, who inherits his father's titles, is one of the first naturalists of the day. He is united to the only surviving daughter of his uncle, Joseph, Compte de Survilliers, who is a most estimable lady, and they have a fine and numerous family. The prince is devoted to zoology, and has been president of that section at the scientific congresses. His brother, Prince Louis Lucien, who was born in England, occupies himself with chemistry, and is zealously engaged in the development of science. He is a fine linguist, and though still young, a philosopher! and quite unshackled by the vanities of the world. This amiable prince and his fair partner, occupy the family villa, without the walls of Florence, where we have seen him again and again working in his

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laboratory, and admired the beautiful order of every thing around him. He strongly resembles a portrait Baron Denon showed us of Napoleon. It was taken when he was first-consul, and before his features had become hardened by the indulgence of reckless ambition. The illustrious father of these princes wisely preferred the pursuits of science and literature, with independence, to the dangerous acquisitions of crowns and sceptres. He has left his sons an inheritance, of which no political revolutions could rob them, with talents and moral qualifications, which do honour to the name they bear.

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LETTER XII.

Villa Brodrick.

I MUST again allude to the winter we passed at Viareggio. The court had gone to Lucca, for Christmas, but the duke had graciously promised to permit us to see him on St. Stephen's Day, to receive and reciprocate the good wishes of the season. The breakfast hour had long past, and it had struck twelve before his royal highness arrived; he came dressed in deep mourning, and looking grief-stricken! "*Je vous apporte la mort,*" were his first words. "Poor Papi is dead! I waited for his funeral!"

The words struck cold upon our hearts. I did not think it possible to feel the regret this intelligence occasioned us for a stranger; we were not long in the duchy, and had never seen the

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distinguished individual to whom it related, but his talents and great qualities were known to us through one we highly honoured, our revered friend, the late General Macauley, who had known him well in India, and we had been in daily expectation of making his acquaintance.

Lazzero Papi drew his first breath in October, 1763, at Pontito, a little town near the confines of the duchy, and under the Pistoja mountains. I cannot ascertain any circumstances respecting his early life, except that the college of Lucca was his *alma mater*, and that he was in youth proficient in Latin, Greek, science, and the literature of his country. From thence, contrary to his wishes, he was sent to Pisa, to study medicine. Amongst some autographs lately sent to me, are several pages of Colonel Papi's receipt-book, or pharmacopia, and I can well understand how little congenial to an aspiring genius, already imbued with the classics, would be the concocting of simples, for an anti-historic draft, to the number of thirty, according to the old-fashioned recipe now before me, roots, leaves, flowers, and barks. In fact, in 1792, long before he had finished his studies, the offer made him of a birth in a merchant-man, going to India, by an intimate friend, who commanded the vessel, proved too

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tempting to be rejected, and he sailed for Calcutta, where the captain becoming ill, was obliged to send his ship home with his lieutenant, and Papi remained to be his physician and nurse. This circumstance determined the young adventurer to seek employment in India. Tossed by fortune, says his biographer, to Travancore, he entered the service of the king, who was an ally of England, and whose army was chiefly officered by Europeans. After some years Papi was raised to the rank of colonel, and during the war with Tippoo Saib, received orders to join the English, in which he was appreciated and promoted.

After the French had been driven out of Egypt, he returned to Europe, by the Red Sea, reached Greece, and sought his native land, where strange changes had taken place during his absence. He found the Baciocchi reigning at Lucca. The princess summoned him, as a man of talent, to her court, appointed him her librarian, and made him director of the museum of sculpture at Carrara.

Colonel Papi returned from India possessing a pension for life, which should have rendered his latter days independent. Probably the difficulty of receiving remittances from England during the war, decided him in a luckless hour to dis-

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pose of his annual stipend for a sum of money. I have been unable to ascertain the particulars. I only know that the bank, or firm, in which he vested his all, failed, and in a moment he lost the well-earned fruits of ten years' toil. His elegant pen, in another country, would have been wealth to him. His "Letters on India," his fine translations of Milton, and above all, his admirable "History of the French Revolution," in six volumes, have gone through several editions. But authorship affords a scanty pittance in Italy, and this illustrious Lucchese, though he appears to have held the appointment of librarian under the new regime, seems to have kept himself entirely in the back ground, to have been personally unknown to the reigning family, till four years before his death, when the duke, inquiring of a literary man in Switzerland, for a preceptor for the hereditary prince, he answered, "your royal highness possesses amongst your Lucchese subjects, the man in the world best calculated to instruct your son in history and belles-letters—Colonel Papi!" The duke sought him immediately, and appointed him one of Prince Ferdinand's tutors. That he was highly appreciated by his sovereign, his royal highness's concern for his loss sufficiently demonstrates.

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I remember General Macauley telling us how warmly poor Papi loved the duke. To give his brother officers an idea of his prince's liberality he said, "his royal highness so fully carries out the Gospel precept, that if you ask for his coat, he will give you his vest also;" the eulogist energetically suiting the action to the word, pulled his own arms half way out of his sleeves as he spoke. Is it not lamentable to have missed the society of and converse of such a man—how gladly should we have been near him in his last hours! He was so English in heart and principle, that we consider him a compatriot. And is it not still more lamentable that Italy has lost one so devoted to her interests—so capable of aiding her moral regeneration! His old friend, too, General Macauley, who perhaps, he had early taught to love this loveliest of lands, was to his latest hour aiding with heart and purse the cause of education and philanthropy in Italy—he too is gone! How many distinguished men have we had to mourn during our few years abroad, all actively zealous, and working for a country where conscientious devoted friends are so greatly needed. There was our admirable countryman, William Taylor Money, the consul-general of Venice. I look back with wonder at what he

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ventured, and what he achieved; the zealous, fearless stand he made in the defence of truth at all times, the good books he circulated in all languages, the benefit he effected amongst our shipping at Venice, as a peace-maker, and above all, the support he gave to the maintenance of our pure religion abroad. His stipend, as consul-general, included no allowance for a chaplain, nevertheless, he was rarely without one, though his income was quite inadequate to such an expense. If he had none, and there was no clergyman present, he officiated himself, and read a sermon to all he could assemble, and the ordinances of our church were never more beautifully performed than in the great hall of the consulate-house.

Our first winter in Italy was passed in the sea-girt city. We left our horses at Mestre, and went there expressly to enjoy Mr. and Mrs. Money's society.

It was our revered friend's practice to go on board every English ship in the harbour, during the week, to inquire into the state of the crews, and encourage their respective captains to read the Scriptures regularly for their men, accompanied by earnest prayer. He went also to adjust their grievances and differences, as far as

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circumstances permitted, and many were the misunderstandings and disputes thus checked, and often converted into friendly feelings. The ship's companies were duly apprised on Saturday of the morrow's service, and invited to attend. I have often looked round at the poor weather-beaten tars, and observed their hard features relaxing as service proceeded, their hearts evidently expanding and softening by the dew of the word, while a glistening tear, brushed away by the rough hand, bore testimony that the song of praise had deeply touched them; and it was a song to touch all hearts! for a sweeter, purer strain of harmony was never breathed from earth to heaven than in those hymns! The deep patriarchal voice of our revered friend, sustaining that of his gentle daughter, till all the congregation joined. After the service, the seamen were often invited to remain, and led into Mr. Money's study to receive Bibles and tracts, which he always gave with paternal admonition, to search after and dwell on the divine truths of the inspired page.

The family invariably retired at once from the hall to their own apartments, to let the congregation disperse. They never received morning visitors, or crossed their threshold on the Sabbath. The morning was passed by each in retirement;

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reading, and meditation. To encourage the young people to commit sacred poetry to memory, Mr. and Mrs. Money always learnt their portions to repeat with their children after dinner, when the happy cheerful groups assembled round the domestic hearth. At six o'clock, the chaplain officiated in French, and read a sermon for the benefit of their Swiss servants, and any persons who wished to join. At eight, a large round table was prepared in the library, for tea, after which the Bibles were brought out, and two or three selected chapters were read, verse about, by the whole party. Mr. Money had adopted this method to keep the attention of his children awake, and none need think the practice too infantine. The chaplain was always ready to explain any verse which requires elucidation, and a commentary from Scott's Bible was read, if desired. The happy evening closed with hymns and a parting prayer. If a foreigner called, he was never refused admittance—a place at the table, and a Bible in his own language were offered to him. To many, I trust, these social evenings were the beginning of good things.

We have humbly emulated the practice of opening our house on Sundays, wherever we have been in the winter, and with the assistance

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of a social tea-table, sacred music, and a clerical friend to preside, our fire-side has become, I trust, a profitable resource to many young persons, who, far from their families, must otherwise have yielded to the continental temptation of theatre, or balls, or have passed the Sunday evenings in their lonely chambers.

When Venice became a free port, our consul's labours of love kept pace with the increase of his official duties. Many more English ships arrived, and a number of engineers and smiths employed for the steamers and new works, brought out their families. For these, Mr. Money's matchless spirit was prompted to form a school in his own house, where the children were instructed every Sunday morning before service; a portion of the evenings was also devoted to reading the Scriptures, with their parents. The importance of such a resource, to persons in their rank of life, is sufficiently striking, and they were fully sensible, I have heard, of the advantage, and deplored deeply the loss of a friend who afforded them such blessings in a foreign land.

On other evenings, Mr. and Mrs. Money frequently received the English, and a few superior Germans and Venetians, with whom they were most popular. The entertainment was generally

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music—their society was highly intellectual. They had a good library, and appreciated the arts.

One evening our gondolier made a mistake in the hour, and we arrived earlier than we were expected. We surprised the whole family, deeply engaged round a table, solving problems of Euclid, under the tuition of the chaplain! The expedient was resorted to during that winter, in order to beguile a young pupil into loving study, and to help him over the pons asinorum at least. Our friends were accused of spoiling their children, and the system was certainly one of great indulgence, nevertheless, it has succeeded admirably, because it was dictated by true love, not selfishness, and sustained with fervent prayer.

Sometimes, if the evening party was small writing *bout-rimées*, or acrostics, was introduced. The contributions were put into a hat, and read aloud by Mr. Money. There was considerable poetical talent in the family, and their excellent father often called it forth in this manner. He was himself an adept in small plays. To commemorate our niece's birth-day, they all, most kindly, came to our hotel, the Europa, and Mr. Money proposed the game of the inn, playing the

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part of the host himself, with great humour. It was all *impromptu*, and every one had a name and something to do. The inn was supposed to be at Margate, just at the moment when a party of Cockneys had arrived from London, on board the Hoy, drenched by a high sea; the catastrophe, I remember was, the cat having kittened in the warming-pan, which was required to air their beds! I detail these trifles lest your young group should suppose the society of such good persons must inevitably be grave and dull! on the contrary, their house was delightful, and there was always a succession of agreeable and intellectual persons, foreign and English. Mr. and Mrs. Money were held in high honour by the viceroy, and his archduchess, who changed the day of their weekly court dinner, from Sunday to Monday, to meet their scruples, as did also the governor. The patriarch of Venice sought their society, and appreciated them highly. When removed to Germany, I have heard that he sent them a splendid porcelain vase, in testimony of his regard. With the Armenians also, whose convent was then in an island of the Adriatic, St. Lazzaro, two miles from Venice, there was a continual interchange of kindnesses. The establishment is literary—they have a school

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for eastern children, for which Mr. Money collected, and a printing-press. At that convent Lord Byron studied oriental languages, under the tuition of the learned secretary, Padre Pasquale. It was during a visit of General Macauley to the consulate-house, that the Armenian archbishop invited its inmates to dinner at St. Lazzaro, and graciously included us, in compliment to our friends. Mr. M. Elphinstone, who was at Venice at the time, on his over-land journey from Bombay, completed the party. It was to us a novel and interesting day. The venerable prelate, with his long flowing beard and rich oriental costume, the monks, in their black robes and high caps, the dinner, wines, and fruits, half eastern, half European, above all, the conversation of our distinguished countrymen, each experienced in eastern lore and conversant in oriental literature. To us it was amongst the white days of our lives—never to be forgotten.

When the consul-general went to Trieste, to make his bow to the emperor, in 1833, his majesty commanded an invitation for dinner, to be sent him for Sunday. Mr. Money respectfully declined accepting it, stating his reasons, and was told by those around him, that he would certainly offend the emperor, and never be invited again.

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However, the courtiers did their sovereign injustice; he not only ordered an invitation for Monday, to be immediately sent, but expressed his high approbation for the consul-general's candour, and showed him the utmost attention. When the emperor inquired of Mr. Money "how Venice was going on," the man of truth fearlessly replied, "as badly as possible, sire; your majesty enacts good laws, but they are ill administered." A long and confidential conversation followed, which ended in these words from the emperor, "I shall come next year and adjust all, I promise you;" before that promise could be redeemed, the excellent emperor and the consul-general were no more! A cold, taken in his gondola, on a severe March day, while doing the honours of Venice to some English guests, proved fatal to our revered friend, and thus closed his career of usefulness, of benevolence, and of love.

The natural heart says, "Why are such men taken from a world which so greatly needs their aid and example!" I remember such words as these having been expressed in the presence of a devoted young clergyman, Mr. Martin, who had been forced to leave his indefatigable labours in Edinburgh, to seek health, or rather

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to die in Italy. "You forget," he said, "how merciful is the call to them, and what a change awaits them!" Through faith in this assurance the bereaved mourners of Venice were sustained!

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LETTER XIII.

Villa Broderick.

We started yesterday to explore some of the mountain villages. Our way lay along the river, and we ascended the banks of the Lima by a good road, as far as the Fabbrica di Ferro. These iron works were so much injured by the inundations of 1836, that it is only now there is a hope of restoring them to activity. The ore is found in the island of Elba, and from thence sent to the foundery of *Follonica*, in the Maremme, to be smelted. The iron is afterwards shipped for Leghorn, and conveyed here to be formed into bars. The proprietors of the works are about to rebuild the bridge, which the flood destroyed. It was of wood, and a most picturesque object in the surrounding scenery.

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Ponies, and an open sedan-chair, for me, awaited us at the Fabbrica, from whence, after crossing the dry bed of a torrent, the site of the village, whose disasters I detailed in my first letter, we pursued our way through a chestnut forest, which afforded us delightful shade, till we emerged in an open plain, surrounded with an amphitheatre of mountains. To the right arose the rocky flank of the Prato Fiorito, or flowered-field, which ranks amongst the lions of the baths. Its form is nearly that of a half cone, the sloping side is covered with the finest turf of green velvet, embroidered with flowers. A quantity of jonquils, gentians, peonies, and many other flowers, the pride of our English gardens, flourish there without culture, and attract numbers of persons to make fatiguing excursions to the summit, during the months of May and June. It is a fine field for the botanist. We hear of parties starting after midnight to see the sun rise from the cone's point, and the opening flowers gemmed with pearly dew; but the gayer pic-nics go later, and return by moon-light, which is more romantic. The view is of great extent, taking in Leghorn and the cities of the coast, with a wide expanse of blue sea, studded with islands—Corsica, Elba, and others. The mineral waters of the baths,

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which contain sulphate of magnesia, carbonate of lime, alum, and iron, in small proportions, are reported, by the traditions of the country, to flow from beneath the Prato Fiorito, and contribute to its extraordinary vegetation. It is also on record, that in pagan times, there was a temple dedicated to Æsculapius, on the summit, where medical herbs were cultivated in honor of the deity, of which these flowers are supposed to be the remnants; It is certain, at least, that no other mountain around produces them. The cleft section of the cone presents a perpendicular rock. The precipice, from above, looks fearful, and strangely contrasts the velvet and flowers of the other side.*

The mineral productions around are also remarkable. A variety of jaspers are found in the neighbourhood. In a vineyard at San Casciano, pieces of lead ore are picked up, which produce fifty per cent.; and at Cassero, on the other side, was a stratum of gold, so productive, that the republic coined doubloons within the last eighty years.

Of the other mountains of the panorama, some arose nearly perpendicular, others sloped gradu-

* The Prato Fiorito is 4637 feet above the level of the sea. The valley of the baths is 555.

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ally, and each was either crowned or gemmed over with villages of extraordinary variety and picturesque beauty. I counted eight at different altitudes before the eye. Our guides particularly pointed out Pieve di Controne, with its belfrey. Cociglia, with its old walls, looking like a little fortress. Limano, which boasts a lead mine, and is rich in flocks of sheep. Vico Pancelorum, a name for which many etymologies have been found. I believe our good commissario, at the Bagni, has discovered the right one, from the arms over the gate, which present a chalice containing the host, or bread of heaven, *Panis Cœlorum* being the motto. This village, with a population of nearly six hundred souls, has the reputation of possessing more bad people than all the mountains around, which is to be attributed to many of them going annually into the Roman states as pedlars, to purchase merchandize, to sell again, which they bring home, and with it all the vices they find by the way. The decapitated head of a culprit still surmounts the gate, in an iron cage, and has been there since the time of the republic, but the warning is insufficient, and as little regarded as the sacred emblem from which the town derives its name.

Celle, another village, would also have been in

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view had it not been swallowed up by a land-slip, in April, 1784. The population amounted to above two hundred. Providentially, they had notice of the catastrophe in time to save their lives, and remove all that was moveable of their little property. One old woman only shared the fate of the village—an extraordinary example of love of birth-place. She obstinately resisted all importunities to leave the old walls, which, she said, had received her first breath and should have her last. She actually stayed to be buried alive in the ruins.

Before us lay the beautiful ravine, which contained Ponte Nero, one of the lions of the country. The arch was destroyed by the first inundation, but the local beauties have not suffered. Our road from thence was steep and fatiguing. After a painful ascent and descent, we found ourselves in the midst of another panorama of mountains. One particularly struck us, rising in the midst, and crowned by a ridge of steep cliffs, as we supposed them to be; they looked almost like a fortress—and a fortress they proved; that of Lucchio, erected by Castruccio in 1320, when he found it essential to raise many strong holds along the mountain frontier, to secure the state against the approach of his enemies, the Floren-

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tines. It was just the village we were most anxious to see, and we hailed the embattled brows of little Lucchio with the respect and tenderness due to an old veteran, whose early days have been distinguished by good service done to sovereign and country, and whose career of honour and renown is embellished by a chivalrous feat, possessing all the charm of romance. We were already aware of the history, which I must now relate, in preference to detailing the toil of our journey home.

It was in 1437, in the time of Cosmo di Midici, that war was raging between the republics of Florence and Lucca. The Medici were already in great power, but the chains with which they fettered the people, were not yet galling. Francesco Sforza, afterwards Duke of Milan, led the Florentine army; Niccolo Piccinino, sent by Filippo Visconti, was the Lucchese Condottiere.

There lived in those days, in the ill-reputed village of Vico Pancelorum, two pretty maidens, whom tradition reports to have been as attractive in person and manners as they proved virtuous, intrepid, and capable of noble achievements. They were the orphan daughters of an old officer, who had fought and bled in many a battle field for his country, and had subsequently fallen. They had recently lost an exemplary

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mother, who, having little property to leave them, expended her declining strength to the last hour, in fortifying their young minds with religious faith and moral precepts for their future guidance.

To Anastasia, the eldest, in whom the anxious parent had the consolation of observing strong principles of rectitude, she strenuously recommended her younger daughter, Lucia, who was only fifteen, and possessed the perilous gift of uncommon beauty, and an ardent sanguine imagination. After the death of their excellent mother, these poor girls had no earthly protector but a distant relative, Gaspero da Stazzema, governor of Lucchio, a man for whom Anastasia felt an unconquerable repugnance. This personage had been raised to the office he held, more by intrigue and low cunning than by military talents. He was handsome—in the prime of life, and a libertine. Both sisters shared his adulation, Anastasia trembled for Lucia. When the distracted state of the country afforded this bad man an excuse for removing his fair cousins to the fortress of Lucchio, under the pretext of affording them parental protection. Anastasia had, to the utmost, resisted leaving their quiet humble home at Vico, but Gaspero was not a man to yield a point on which he had determined; and his

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pretty cousins were soon on horseback, attended by the governor's lieutenant and servants, and moving towards Lucchio. A faithful adherent of their father's, old Michele, who had followed him to the wars, was at their side, though more than once warned off by the officer. Arrived at the foot of the mountain, Gaspero made his appearance in full armour, and handsomely mounted to receive and conduct his cousins to the castle. Lucia's little heart beat, as he joined them, and heard him whisper, welcome, in accents only too well suited to please a lady's ear, while Anastasia repulsed with cold dignity the compliments he lavished on her prudence and good sense, in taking refuge under his protection. It was only at the gate he perceived Michele, and inquiring with a scowl, what had brought the fellow there, he ordered him to return from whence he came, heedless of his elder cousin's expostulations and entreaties, that he might be permitted to attend them.

The poor girl's alarm for their situation was greatly augmented by this incident. She could only commend herself to the Father of the fatherless, and pray for strength to protect her sister's tender years.

Gaspero had ordered a handsome apartment

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to be in readiness for his young guests, in a tower of the castle, apart from that his troops occupied. It opened on a small terrace garden, which appeared to have been laid out and arranged with some care for their reception. Anastasia, in this retreat, with her embroidery and a few books, which, by her father's instruction in childhood, she was learned enough to read, would have passed her days happily, notwithstanding the occasional reports of attacks from the Florentines, had she not a more appalling enemy to fear, in the licentious freedom with which the governor thought himself at liberty to treat them; above all, she was deeply pained to perceive that to Lucia his adulation was acceptable. However, the duties of his office left him little time to importune them, and matters were in this state, when Lucia having fallen asleep one evening, Anastasia prolonged her lonely stroll on the terrace, till the sun had some time gone down. Her anxious reflections were interrupted by hearing her name repeated in a low voice from beneath the wall. Looking down she perceived in the light of the rising moon, a man hanging by the ivy, which to a certain height, mantled the curtain on that side of the fortress, leaving some feet of bare wall, without support for friend or foe.

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She recognized at once the faithful Michele, and saw all the danger of his situation. "Hold fast," said the spirited girl," and I will bring you aid in a moment." Without further parley, Anastasia hastened to the well—it was at the end of the terrace, but exposed to the view of the military piazza—she approached it cautiously, and was just going to lay her hand on the rope, when she perceived a sleeping soldier, with his head resting directly on the coil. She groaned in disappointment, and was about to retire, and trust to the aid of her long scarf to save poor Michele, when she recognized, in the sleeper, a townsman of Vico, whose family were well known to her. She did not hesitate at once to lay her hand on his arm. The youth was instantly on his feet; by a gesture she enjoined silence, and began to unfasten the rope, a labour she could scarcely have achieved, but for his more dexterous assistance. While coiling it up she imparted to him poor Michele's predicament, imploring his aid and secrecy. "Madonna Stasia," said the youth, "my poor life is at your service; I have watched for days for an opportunity to tell you so, for you are in danger, and might need a friend. It was no time for explanation; they both hastened to the wall, and in a few minutes, by the strength of

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Marco's stalwart arm, old Michele was safely resting his weary and bruised limbs on a stone seat; a cordial brought cautiously from the tower by Anastasia soon renovated his strength. She was careful not to awake her sister, and knowing Gaspero was that night indulging in a deep carouse with his officers, she thanked God for his absence.

As soon as Michele could speak, Anastasia questioned him anxiously as to the risk he had run to join her. The old man answered that he would have risked twenty lives to fulfil the errand on which he now came.

He then told her that he had been hovering about the fortress every night since the removal of his young mistress, without ever being able to find access to her, in consequence of the governor's strict orders for his exclusion; that on the preceding night, when returning late from his hopeless patrol, he had been startled by hearing a deep groan from the ravine he was about to cross. After some search he discovered a man, in the guise of a monk, whom he remembered to have seen early in the evening leave the fortress, stealthily by the postern. The wretched being had evidently fallen down the precipice, and but just breathed his last. In raising him, Michele per-

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ceived a letter clenched in his hand, and on searching further, found in his pocket a small purse of gold. Both these the poor man thought it his duty to carry to the *piovano* of Vico. The old priest was no clerk of fame ; he could read a little, just enough to discover that the mission was written by Gaspero dei Stazzema, and that Anastasia and Lucia were named in it. Michele at once suspecting some treachery towards his young ladies, told the churchman that the purse should be his, to inter, and say masses for the dead man's soul, if he would give him the letter, which he now, after great perils, placed in the hands of his young mistress. The moon not affording light enough to decipher the governor's indifferent penmanship, Anastasia hastened back to the tower, to peruse it, and, with horror, discovered the whole purport. It was addressed to a Florentine knight, serving under Francesco Sforza, confirming a compact already agreed upon, to deliver up the fortress, for a sum in gold, the following night, stipulating, however, what he appeared to have forgotten in a former missive, that his friend, the knight, should have the disposal of his fair cousin, Anastasia, on condition that he was left unmolested in his command of Lucchio, and in the possession of his little Lucia.

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He intended, he added, to drown the senses of his officers, next night, in a deep carouse, and would, himself, let in the Florentine troops, at the postern, after midnight, as he had already promised, but they must remember not to approach the walls till he had made the signal agreed upon from the terrace tower. It required all Anastasia's strength of mind to read of this perfidy with composure, and still more to resolve what should be done. To avail himself of Marco's assistance to escape, and fly with her sister, under Michele's protection, would have been the only expedient of a weak girl, but Anastasia was the daughter of a soldier and of a patriot—love of her country was a paramount feeling, and she resolved to save Lucchio from a foul treachery, or die in the attempt.

After a fervent prayer for divine assistance, she returned to her humble friends on the terrace, and imparted to them the perfidy she had discovered. They were naturally furious, at the detail, but their first thought was for the sisters, and Marco supplicated her to trust to his guidance, and fly with old Michele to Vico, rather than risk being involved in a conflict which appeared inevitable. But her energetic mind had already decided on what she deemed more impor-

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tant service for her two adherents. From the officers of the garrison, whose drinking songs and noisy mirth were already audible from the banqueting-hall, no counsel or aid was to be expected, but to the veteran soldiery, Marco might make known the probable approach of the Florentines, and keep them on the alert, recommending him to send the steadiest to the postern, to interrupt the governor if he attempted to open the gate, and to conceal a few others, with himself, near the tower, in case she should require his assistance, of which a signal from Michele would give them notice. She told her old servant to coil up the rope of the well on his arm, without explaining why, and conducted him, who had risked so much for her deliverance, into the tower, where, after procuring him some refreshment, and arranging a couch for him, behind a screen, in their living room, she enjoined rest, and commanded him not to move or discover himself until she called for his presence.

The intrepid girl next aroused her sister, and telling her the governor would expect to find them waking to receive him, told her that she had discovered that Gaspero had the intention of leaving the fortress that night, by the postern, on some dangerous enterprize, and that she would

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give her leave to be as affectionate to him as she pleased, and not be angry if she listened to his compliments, for, that if he went, much danger to himself, to them, and to the fortress, would be inevitable.

Lucia, alarmed by the fear of his absence, on some perilous exploit, innocently declared that she would do anything to retain him, near them. On which her sister, laughing, showed her the rope, and engaged her to assist in tying him to the wooden settle, where she predicted he would soon fall asleep, and forget all intention of leaving the fortress.

It cost the high principled Anastasia a violent effort to deceive, even for a good purpose. She fully believed, that whatever might be Lucia's partiality for Gaspero, his foul treachery would render him an object of abhorrence to her, if there were time fully to convince her of it—but the night was now far advanced—he might be momentarily expected, and the expedient she had adopted, was the only one to secure her sister's immediate co-operation. The prank delighted the playful girl. The rope was immediately cut, and prepared with noozes and slips—some of the ends being made fast to the carved back and arms of the cumbrous settle, ready to secure their prey.

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The trap was no sooner in order than the governor entered.

He was evidently flushed with wine, but not intoxicated. His cousins rose to receive him, Lucia with glad smiles, Anastasia with well dissembled courtesy. He was flattered by perceiving they expected him, and poured forth a warmer tone of gallantry than ever. Lucia looked delighted, Anastasia not displeased.

He soon had an arm round each, wished he could marry them both, and declared as that must not be, that he would content himself with his beautiful Lucia, and that he had found a brave knight for Anastasia. She pretended to whimper and doubt him—he protested it was all true, and that she should see him that night, on which she only whimpered the more, and declared there was no one in the fortress she could like except himself. He then told her not to fear; that her intended was a brave Florentine, and that he would be at the postern at midnight. This confirmation of his intended perfidy, occasioned Anastasia an emotion she could ill suppress, but Gaspero attributed it to love for himself, and disappointment that he had not chosen her, which set him ruminating how he might monopolize both sisters, as he had first intended. But the

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bell tolling the midnight hour, he started up, and telling his cousins he must leave them, they both expressed violent grief, and threw themselves on his neck. "You must not go," said the impassioned Lucia, clinging to him; "I know you are about to desert us." "Only for a brief space," said her lover, unable to disentangle himself from their real and feigned caresses; and, quite unmanned, he threw himself back on the couch. In his extacy he never perceived that, while Lucia lay on his bosom, and fondly importuned, Anastasia was securing his arms and legs to the settle, and had even dexterously passed a nooze over his head, and fastened it to the carved wood work behind. The light waning in the lamp assisted in the operation.

At length, assured that every cord and noose had been made fast, the girls withdrew their arms from his neck, and discovered the stronger net they had woven about him; laughing and dancing around him, and declaring he should be their prisoner for that night at least. Anastasia, then extinguishing the lamp, led old Michele from behind the arras, and making for the door, which they barred and bolted without, they were already on the terrace before Gaspero recovered his senses enough, to be aware of his actual situation.

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The veterans of the garrison, and a few under officers, who, not being invited, had escaped the temporary poison of the governor's drugged wines, were all collected there, determined to seize the traitor and surprise the enemy at the postern.

The first act, a gentle girl's ingenious stratagem, had already achieved; the second, a handful of men soon accomplished. After making the governor secure in the strongest dungeon of the castle, the concerted light was placed on the terrace, and the whole waking garrison made a sortie at the postern, and surrounded those who had come there, frought with the certainty of possessing the fortress. Great was their consternation to find themselves, half an hour after, the inmates of its dungeons, and to have the perfidious governor for a near neighbour. The moral chronicle forgets to tell us what punishment followed his delinquency; but for the honor of his countrywomen, he should not have omitted to record that Lucia, when fully aware of her lover's treachery, rejoiced in having been made the instrument of his capture, and only lamented all the caresses she had thrown away on an object so unworthy. Both damsels received the reiterated thanks of the Lucchese senate, and handsome dow-

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ers in testimony of the benefit they had conferred on their country. The Marchese Mazzarosa, the minister of Lucca, has recently honored the achievements with the following commemoration:

Due Vergine
Il Castellano di Lucchio
Sul tradire quella Rocca
Adescando
Legarono.
Laonde fu difesa e salvata,
Di lodi pubbliche
E
Pubblica Dote
Rimeritolle
Il Senato.

The legend I have amplified for the amusement of my young friends, runs thus:—

"Mentre i Lucchesi si brigavano d'impedire ai Fiorentine l'entrare da quella parte, due giovinette, Anastasia e Lucia di Vico Pancelloro, leggiadre e spigliate della persona, aggraziate e avvenenti del volto, animose del cuore e scaltro della mente, avuto odore che Gaspero da Stazzema, Castellano di Lucchio fosse per mancar fede ai Lucchesi, e dare il forte in mano dei nemici pensarono una sottile malizia a render vano quel reo dissegno: datesi a far le viste di esser prese d'amore per lui, dicendogli assai carazze fecersi metter dentro della rocca; e tanto lo aggirarono

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che seppero scovargli il segreto del cuore, e trargli di bocca il perfido intendimento, che recato ad effetto potevo pericolare lo stato. Avuto certezza dell' animo suo tennerlo alquanto in lusinghevoli parole, finché vedendo loro il bello, lo avvinghiarono, e strettamente legaronlo; quindi chiamato il presidio, per far sicuro il castello, aintate dai loro trasserlo prigione a chi reggeva la somma delle cose, perchè avesse gastigo delle sua scelleratezza." *

* Bartholomæi Beverini Annalium ab origine Lucensis urbis. Lib. xi.

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LETTER XIV.

Villa Brodrick.

Lucca also boasts of an Improvvisatrice, la Teresa Bandettini, to whom we made a visit of respect and curiosity not long before her death. Hearing she was declining, I feared we might have to deplore, when too late, as in the case of Colonel Papi, never having seen her. A sketch of her history will render, what I have to detail of our visit, more interesting.

She was a precocius child, and at six years old could lisp Petrarch from an old copy of the sonnets, which she had found by chance, and scribble verses on such lives of the saints as pedlars sell for pence. Her humble parents gave no assistance or encouragement to her studies; seeing her pale and thin, they prohibited reading, and

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deprived her of pens and paper, till she was forced to write with a piece of stick. Distressed by what she considered the greatest privation, she complained to a friend who had some influence in her family, and who prevailed on them to cramp her genius no more. She learnt the classics of her country by heart, studied history and mythology, applied herself to Latin, and soon translated Virgil's Pastorals into verse; she extemporized on every little occasion, but all this talent and acquirement had nearly been thrown away. The necessities of her family condemned Teresa to the stage, and even worse—to be a dancer! "Her ambition," says her biographer, "prompted her to be a sister to the sacred nine—her poverty forced her to stoop to be the mere handmaid of Terpsichore."

At sixteen, her theatrical career commenced in Corsica, and was afterwards pursued in Tuscany. Dancing is the poetry of motion, but that did not content Teresa—her thoughts were always in Parnassus, which, probably, saved her from the moral contamination of her immoral profession, whilst her love of literature led her to avoid the young and frivolous, and seek the society and conversation of the old and wise. She married early, and was, in 1792, persuaded by her com-

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patriot, Vincenzo Guinigi, a Lucchese noble at Venice, to venture on a more noble road to fortune. Her first plunge into the ocean of the imagination was at Udine; she sustained herself nobly, and appeared again and again at Venice, Padua, Milan, and the principal cities of northern Italy. She was hailed as the tenth muse, and fêted by all her brother bards—the Pindemontis, Cesarotti, Parini, &c. &c. The light of these stars illumined her path; she studied Greek, explored the sacred page—made herself conversant with the literature of France and England—until she wanted but the suffrage of Rome to complete her triumph. She had already received her diploma from the Arcadia, under the name Amarilli Etrusca. She was heard and crowned with laurel, at the capitol—the academy demanded her portrait—and she was also crowned at Perugia and Mantua.

It was in Rome she amazed her brother shepherds, by extemporizing eight times on the same theme, but each in a different metre; she there acquired Monti's friendship, and retained it during his life.

On her return to Lucca, in 1794, her bust was placed in the academy. At Florence she became acquainted with Alfieri, the most fastidious of

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men, and a declared enemy to extempore effusions, even at the bar. He was amazed at her powers—her noble bearing, grace, and elegance; unable to sleep, the night he first heard her, from the excitement she occasioned him, he poured forth his admiration in a sonnet, which she always considered was the strongest attestation of her pre-eminence. In 1800 she went to Vienna, and would have resided there, had not the new masters of Italy, the French, required their subjects to remain in their native states.

The conquerors of her country honoured her in words, at least, and she was distinguished by Napoleon at Modena. Melzi, the vice-president of the Italian republics, granted her a pension, which the Duke of Modena continued; while residing in his duchy, she translated the Paralipomeni of Homer, and composed "The Thesiad," and a tragedy. Her latter years have been passed in her native country, where she has reposed under the shelter and patronage of the house of Bourbon, and enjoyed the respect to which her talents and virtues entitled her.

This outline of Teresa Bandettini's career, I have abridged from a memoir, prefixed to a new edition of her poems, in three volumes, which the Duke of Lucca's munificence ordered to be

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published for her benefit, in 1835. The biography is from the pen of the Marchese Mazzarosa, a Lucchese noble, who distinguished himself in the world of literature, and is minister of public instruction.

Our visit to the aged poetess, was to me a pilgrimage, for we found her residing in the highest floor of one of the highest palaces in Lucca. It was a sad but salutary lesson to see how the brightest of this world's stars fade in their wane. "How is the gold become dim—how is the much fine gold changed!" was the first thought which the contemplation of the once brilliant Amarilli Etrusca suggested to us. We found her a ruin! Even the dignity of old age had given way to palsy and paralysis. She sat on her sofa, nearly powerless at first, trembling all over, and agitated, perhaps, by the presence of strangers. What a contrast to her full length portrait, by Angelica Kauffman, which hung opposite, and represented her as Sappho, in the moment of triumphant inspiration, her eye in a fine frenzy rolling. At first we thought it impossible there could ever have been a trait of resemblance between the Lespian, as there pourtrayed, and the poor, languid, tremulous, sufferer before us; but as we sat and tried to comfort her, and found subjects

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to interest her, the countenance brightened, and the eye lighted up—the drooping head was raised, the articulation became firm, and the tongue recovered some of its lost eloquence. When we talked of the past, I reminded her how bountifully she had been gifted with talents to benefit others, and sing the praises of the Almighty Donor; the theme seemed to recal her powers, even of action, and in the brilliant conversation which followed, a strong resemblance to the portrait became evident. When describing her presentation to Napoleon at Modena, she said—"You know how little complaisant the emperor was reputed to be towards women; the moment he was told that I was an improvvisatrice, he vociferated 'Fatemi due versi, fatemi due versi;' and because I hesitated, he stamped with his foot and thundered out again, 'Make me a couplet.' How I contrived to obey him, I know not, but I did articulate two lines, something about the laureled Cæsar, and was greeted with '*bravo! bravo!*' in return; the emperor having either forgotten Italian, or deemed masculine applause most complimentary."

On hearing this characteristic anecdote, I congratulated Madame Bandettini on having fared better than another distinguished lady, niece to a doge of Venice, Giustinia Michele, who relates

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to us, that when she was presented to the emperor, her name was unfortunately prefaced with the word "celebrated." "And pray, madam, what are you celebrated for?" was Napoleon's confounding inquiry. "For the goodness of my friends, sire," she answered. "But what have you done?" pursued Napoleon, impatiently. "I have translated some tragedies, sire." "Corneille, Racine, I suppose," continued the pertinacious emperor. "May it please your majesty, I have translanted Shakspeare!" England was then the goading thorn in Napoleon's side; he turned from her with a scowl, and never deigned her another word or look during his five days sojourn in the ocean city.

Signora Michele was a most amiable and cultivated person, the work which will carry her name to posterity, is her "Feste Veneziane," in which she gives the principal events of her country's history, in graphic descriptions of its fêtes.

It was the policy of the republic never to allow the people time to feel their chains; nearly every other day was a festa, instituted expressly to celebrate some triumph by land or sea, in which their pride and honor had been concerned. They were generally beautiful pageants, and the events which they commemorated were full of striking incidents

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and stirring interest. That of the capture of the young brides by pirates, and their heroic rescue, is well known; La Michele details the whole story, and describes the fête instituted to recal that eventful day. One can imagine with such accessaries as Venice possessed, by land and sea—her splendidly decorated gallies—her rich costumes, and gorgeous palaces, reflected by the blue wave, how imposing, how magnificent must have been her fêtes! Amongst the religious ceremonies, La Michele has well described that for Palm-Sunday.

The doge and authorities attended high mass at St. Mark's. Artificial palms, worked by the sisterhood of St. Andrew, were prepared on the altar; that for the doge was gilt, and bore his arms on the stem, wrought like the leaves, in gold, silver, and coloured silks. After being blessed, the palms were presented to the sovereign and his suite, the magistrates, clergy, and choristers; at the conclusion of high mass, there was a procession around the gorgeous aisles, the doge and authorities carrying olive branches, the choir chanting "Glory, honor, praise, and power." Arrived at the great door, they drew up, and at the same moment, the sacristans from the platform above, where stand the bronze horses, gave liberty

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to flights of birds, principally doves and pigeons; the escape of these last was intentionally impeded by something attached to their claws, which constrained them to descend into the piazza, in order to enable the assembled multitude to catch and carry home their Easter Sunday's dinner! This ceremony was thrice repeated during the procession, after which the doge retired, and St. Mark's piazza long remained the scene of eager pursuit and noisy merriment. Many of the stronger pigeons, however, rose in the air, seeking refuge, and where could they find it more secure than in the temple of *Him* who had created them. The roof, the domes, and minarets of St. Mark's, became their sanctuary, and from thence they were never disturbed. Others made their way to the leads of the palazzo ducale, to sympathise in tender lamentation with the unhappy tenants of those inhuman prisons. All were respected, and in time, by new accessions from year to year, the feathered colony became a considerable republic, to which the government contributed not only largesses of grain, but convenient and well-situated dove-cots for their young. As long as the Venetian republic subsisted, they were considered pensioners of the state; but when that remarkable fabric, after thirteen centuries of exis-

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tence, fell to pieces in 1796, these birds must have perished, had it not been for the compassion of several private families, who, amidst their own woes, remembered the poor pigeons, and gave them food. The ancient Venetians had fled to the Lagoons, from the destroying sword of Alaric and his Visigoths, and found a refuge amongst the sands—the feathered colonists had established their liberty more securely—on foundations consecrated to religion and justice. They still exist and parade the piazza, in all the dignity of sturdy republicans; some are of great size and beauty, and the wildest little scape-grace, however addicted to other mischief, never molests these birds; on the contrary, you see children continually drawing out crumbs from their tiny pockets to feast the pigeons; and it used to be an amusement to us to see them assemble daily, at a certain window over the arcade, precisely as the hour of two sounded from the beautiful campanile. There, drawn up in order along the edge of the first floor, they awaited the opening of the casement and the appearance of the friendly hand which never failed to minister to their wants.

One night we had been sauntering through the piazzetta, and gazing at St. Mark's by moonlight, when Madame Michele beckoned us from her

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window. We found her rooms filled with half the aristocracy of Venice, who were dancing to the piano-forte, with several young officers of a German regiment just arrived. It seemed to be an impromptu, for none were dressed more than ourselves. Fancy the effect to English ears, and the crowd of associations which rushed on the mind, to contrast the scene before us, when the names of Dandolo, Foscari, Barbarigo, Contarini, Mocenigo, and Grimani, were mentioned as being amongst the juvenile dancers! We were the more struck with the historical nomenclature, because it was the only evening we were in Venetian society. The hours were late, and the receptions formal—we never left our fire-side except for the consulate house.

Madame Benzoni, the celebrated "*Biondina in gondoletta*," might be seen any fine bright day at four o'clock, with her old cavalière (whom she called Beppo), amongst the promenaders of the piazza. She came forth like a butterfly just awake, to enjoy an hour of sunny bliss, and during the carnival the old beauty used to receive at two in the morning after the opera! What a perversion! I remember a young English officer of the navy, telling us he had been once taken in to attend for conversazione. The ladies sat in a

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formal circle in the centre of the room; the gentlemen stood behind, and might talk over their chairs, had they not preferred talking to each other; though Beppo had the reputation of being a wit, and a caustic one, yet the coterie to a foreigner appeared in no degree more agreeable than Cowper's description of the tea-parties in a remote English country town, fifty years ago—

> "The circle form'd, they sat in silent state
> Like figures placed upon a dial plate.
> Yes, Mam, and no, Mam, uttered softly, show
> Every five minutes, how the minutes go,"

and no tea and muffins to keep them awake.

Madame Albrizzi's evenings seemed to be of a more social character; as a woman of distinguished talent, the stars shone about her. She was kind and agreeable to us, because recommended by her old lover, Baron Denon; he had been chargé d'affairs at Naples, when the French revolution broke out. The throne and government overturned, his charge was at an end; he went to Venice where he consoled himself copying the paintings, etching à la Rembrandt, and making love to the fair Greek, then a widow. Matters were all settled for their nuptials, when the national convention issued its decree, that all Frenchmen out of France, by a certain date,

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should be considered exiles. Denon cared little for their politics, but he loved his country, and would not lose his estates; he hurried away and never saw Madame Albrizzi again, till he entered Italy with the Emperor Napoleon.

The "Feste Veneziane" would amuse my young friends; its ingenious and amiable author sleeps with her fathers, but there is a new edition in five small volumes, published at Milan, well worthy of your library.

I left the revived Sappho abruptly, to talk to you of La Michele. Our reminiscences of Italy have become like the beautifully carved Chinese balls, one so involved within another, that it is impossible to recur to the details of any of them, without looking through the open work of the rest, and thus am I continually guilty of digressions, giving you episode within episode, to the end of the chapter.

Before we parted from Madame Bandettini, *I* also ventured to say "*fatemi due versi.*" She sighed, and said the muses had fled to younger votaries, but that I should have an autograph of some earlier inspiration, and she sent me a copy of verses, the last perhaps she ever bestowed.

The enthusiastic admiration which had greeted her days of song, had mellowed down into the

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milder popularity, which is the meed of worth and benevolence in advanced life. Madame Bandettini was a Dorcas, and it is surely not presuming too much to hope, that "her alms were had in remembrance, in the sight of God." She died, 6th April, 1837.

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LETTER XV.

Bagni di Lucca, Villa Brodrick.
February.

THE carnival is going on at this season even here. The villagers are performing Charles XII., and a moral comedy from the "*Promessi Sposi.*" There are a few masks flitting about in strange contrast to the rural scene around. Even at Rome, there is rarely anything witty or intellectual in Italian masquerading, the whole spirit being exhausted in throwing comfits, or their counterfeits, made of lime or plaister of Paris. The deadness of the carnivals is instanced, by those who consider Italy now a mere crysalis, as a proof that she is in a state of transition. In Belgium I remember the spirit was better kept up; there were many amusing groups and pretty pageants. Once we saw two beautiful children

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carried in a palanquin as Paul and Virginia, with some fifty or sixty well-dressed black slaves, and attendants, preceding and following on foot, with instruments of music; and at Ghent we cannot forget one excellent mask in the streets in the burlesque of fashion, personifying a fine lady in the coarsest habiliments. Over her face a cabbage net did duty for a veil, and a string of old corks supplied her necklace; but these touches of humour are rare, therefore we were the more surprised at some wit displayed by a group, yesterday, in the village piazza, consisting of a portly dame, with her cavalière, who carried her shawl and reticule, the poor husband, sneaking behind, was led by his wife with a string attached to his nose, and was obliged to stand when the others called for coffee and chairs, none being provided for him, his lady, however, condescended to give him orders from time to time, and ultimately left him to pay. This satire on their betters reminds me that I should bear testimony of the improving morals of the Italian aristocracy. However the unfortunate prevalence of *marriages de convenance* marred the happiness of the last generation. I hear of happy domestic couples every where now. Mothers nursing their infants, husbands devoted to their wives, and inseparable from them.

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When we were first in Florence, in 1829, I formed the acquaintance of two beautiful sisters, one of whom enjoyed the distinction of being called *la belle Italienne*, at Napoleon's coronation. This lady had one daughter married, who had recently made her a grandmother, and another grown up, who at first accompanied her mother when she visited us, but the second time the marchesa came alone, and when I asked her for la marchesina, she frankly told me, she dared not bring her in the way of the many fine young men she would be liable to meet in English society. She had but just come out of a convent, and was engaged to a relation whom she had not yet seen, and who was neither very young nor very attractive. "What would become of me," she added, "if a prior fancy interfered with her liking him!" "And what a satire you have pronounced on your system," I replied. A long conversation ensued, in which I described to her what happy lives the daughters of England enjoy in their domestic homes, habituated, even before they enter the world, to the society of their family connexions and intimates, and early rendered capable by education, and hearing good conversation, of forming opinions and judging of character for themselves, before they are called

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upon to decide the happiness of their future lives. The subject was animating, and I represented in glowing colours the happy system of mutual confidence which subsists between mothers and daughters in well regulated English families, which guarantees confiding parents against their children forming imprudent attachments, and ensures young people against unreasonable opposition when their affections are under the control of propriety and good sense. "I assure you," I said, "that the life of an English girl is generally the golden age of her existence, and often a delightful romance." "Alas!" replied my friend, with emotion, and in a subdued tone, "the romance here begins with matrimony." I afterwards heard, that her own story, poor thing, had been a sad example of the fact; separated from an accomplished and highly intellectual nobleman to whom her heart was early engaged, because a richer suitor sought her hand, and, obliged to marry a man who was altogether uncongenial, her career had been one on which she could not look back upon without pain.

I am not without hope that this conversation, and others which followed, though unavailing to save her already affianced child, made some impression on her sister, who had then two daugh-

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ters in the Royal Institute. They came out three or four years after, and I had the satisfaction of observing, that instead of being introduced to *intended* husbands, they were taken moderately into society, and permitted to see the *élite* of the young nobles at their mother's receptions. They were quite English in their appearance and manners, modest and most attractive girls. Both formed ardent attachments, which were all their family could desire, and both married admirably into the first families, domestic happiness and thoroughly moral households have been the result.

Many similar instances might be cited to establish the delightful fact, that English example and English influence is working slowly, but surely, to produce a happier system of morals in Italy. I don't know an instance, and I have inquired particularly, of a young couple married within the last ten years whose lives are not exemplary.

How important is it, therefore, that our compatriots should acquit themselves nobly and becomingly abroad, and how lamentable that many forget the restraints of home, allow their daughters to run wild, their sons to gamble, neglect the Sabbath, and follow pleasure to the

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very verge of propriety, if not beyond it, associating with persons of sullied reputation in the native *beau monde*, only because they are showy, and entertain them, and going to the houses of English residents, whom they know to be excluded, by bad conduct, from society at home. Retired as we live, I have seen and heard enough of their lamentable worldliness, and wretched forgetfulness of what is due to themselves and their country, particularly in Florence, to wish our gracious queen, like the Emperor of Russia, might, for general utility, refuse passports to all who could possibly bring discredit on our privileged country. I have been assured again and again, that no Russian family is ever permitted to travel who does not possess qualifications to reflect honour on the land of their birth. Possibly the prohibition may extend more to those wanting means and education, than to persons of doubtful morals. However this may be, the few subjects of the autocrat, whom we have known of the fair sex, have appeared of exemplary conduct. The most beautiful character I have become acquainted with abroad, was Madame de N——, a niece of Marshal Diebetzh. She was brought up in Russia, though Prussia claims the family, which belongs to the Lutheran Church, for her

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own. Since I have been unintentionally led to mention my friend, I must give you a trait of her. She had been a beautiful girl, and had married very young, to gratify the ambition of her family: her health fell a sacrifice to the unfortunate temper and propensities of her husband. The emperor, who, despot though he be as regards Poland, is a father to his Russian subjects, interested himself for her, and she was permitted to travel with her five children, to find a happier home and milder climate in the sweet south. Her matronly graces attracted us, when she arrived here a stranger—we found her highly cultivated, refined to elegance, and possessing every womanly beauty of mind and person. It was the summer the cholera entered Italy—the fearful scourge had not yet reached Leghorn, and Madame de N—— had deprived herself of her children, and settled them with their governess and tutor, in a villa near the beach, to profit by bathing, the sea air having been prohibited to herself.

We delighted in her society, and welcomed her constantly to the cottage. One evening she came when the duke was with us. The conversation turned much on the dreaded malady, and she expressed anxiety about her family, but reluctance to remove them till there was really

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danger. The following morning I was surprised to see a portantino chair, under our portico, before church hour—it was our friend, she looked pale and agitated, she said, "The fearful scourge is come at last, there have been some cases at Leghorn—a confidential servant has arrived, during the night, to inform me, and I have sent him back with orders to bring my children at once, lest the cordon should be drawn, but I feel it is my duty to inform the Lucca government, what I have done. I could not be answerable for introducing the malady, even to save my babes. Will Colonel Stisted go at once to the duke, in order that my family may be stopped at the frontier, if H. R. H. deems it right; in that case I shall go and occupy the Lazzaretto with them."

It was in vain we tried to persuade this high principled woman, to defer her communication. The children not being in the town of Leghorn, there was no contagion to apprehend, but she said, "No, I must do as I would be done by." Though evidently suffering all the tortures of acute maternal anxiety, she insisted on Colonel Stisted's going to the palace, and awaited his return in a degree of agitation, which sufficiently proved what the conscientious act was costing her. The duke's

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reply was like himself—"Let the children be brought with all dispatch. I only hope they may be in time. The cordons will be drawn before morning." She was affected by H. R. H.'s generosity, and then only indulged in a tear. I kept her with us all day, to beguile, if possible, the terrible suspense. At ten we left her at the hotel, entreating her to compose herself to rest, but she watched the bridge from her window all night, starting at every sound—at last, towards morning, a distant rumble was heard, the sound increased, a heavy carriage like a caravan was passing the bridge—it was hers—her children were a moment after in her arms.

There was as much gentleness as firmness about Madame De N——. We enjoyed her society the following winter at Pisa, and she was near us another year in Rome. She then returned to Russia. By the law of the land, a wife who has been absent five years and a day, is divorced. Emancipation would have been bliss to her, but she would not, on her children's account, take advantage of her power, or avail herself of the emperor's indulgence. She returned, but there was no peace for her there. By her sovereign's advice she wandered forth again. When I last heard from her, she was at Vienna, and hoping to visit

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England. For four years I have had no tidings, and dread to hear that mental anxiety has destroyed a delicate frame—for her the change would be a happy one.

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LETTER XVI.

Villa Brolrick.

THE present minister of police at Lucca, is a native of this valley, and a man whose talents and probity would do honour to any country. He was formerly minister of finance. The first time we were presented to Signor Pieri, he startled me with these words, "If it had not been for the generosity of a benefactor, I should now be at the baths, carrying you in a portantino chair!" An humble grateful spirit dictated this acknowledgment: his birth *is* in fact of the humblest, but he owes nothing to patronage except his early education. We may say of him, what was said of Edmund Burke, "he draws his nobility from God." High mental endowments, and moral integrity have placed him in the distinguished

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position he now holds, at the duke's particular request; for his reputation and income as an advocate were all sufficient for his moderate ambition. His administration of affairs, I believe, gives general satisfaction; his views are enlarged and liberal, and he has made many salutary improvements in the police department. He holds, besides, the appointment which we call attorney-general. He has a fine family, and when the labours of his office allow him time for relaxation, he sometimes comes here for a few days, to live among his humble relations. However cold the weather may be, his daughters at once assume the costume of the valley, and wear muslin shawls on their heads, or the graceful mezera, or scarf, and lay aside their town bonnets, lest they should look different from their cousins, to whom their time is entirely devoted. It was in vain we urged the minister to spare us a day when last here. He would not leave his poor relations for any temptation we had to offer; he came, however, occasionally in the morning, and always left us instructed and amused by his highly original and pithy conversation. He is so imbued with the early history of his country, that he has called his sons after the Lombard heroes, Almachilde and Eriprando; his daughters are Zelmira and Neside.

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Another family we know, though far from aping a classical taste, have had recourse to pagan history, and had their children christened Orestes, Pylades, Electra, and Ægisthus, while others seek names in holy writ, as yet uncanonized. It is a sign of the times to see the saint's calendar thus sedulously avoided.

I must mention another name connected with Lucca, and deserving of honour, the Priore* Bartelone. His calm benign demeanor first won our admiration; his literary efforts in the cause of Christianity have commanded our respect. Having studied our language some years since, that English and American travellers, professing the faith of Rome, should not be without a confessor at Lucca; he now turns his acquirement to translating our standard works, as an antidote to the growing infidelity of the age. He has just completed the second volume of Sharon Turner's "Sacred History of the World," and is in correspondence with the gifted author respecting the third. As a scientific work, it has been an arduous undertaking for the translator, and he has often brought us, during its progress, a list of

* Since the above was written, the priore has been advanced to the dignity of decano or dean.

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technical terms, which no dictionary could supply him with. To follow up a literary course so well commenced, I have ventured to lay before him "Chalmer's Discourses on Astronomy," but he had recently met with Bishop Heber's sermons, and they seem to be his *ne plus ultra*. "If I could only be assured," he said earnestly, "that this man's life was equal to his doctrine, I should say, human perfection could go no further." Without replying, I took from the book-case, Robinson's journal of our lamented countryman's last journey amongst his churches in India, and placed it in the priore's hands, saying, "read that and you will know what he was." How grateful I felt, at the moment, to Admiral Hawker's kindness in leaving us his copy of the work, he said, "it may be useful," and so indeed it has proved.

The good priore comes annually, for the month of August, to the baths, and always makes us an early visit. In his black silk coat, pendant cloak, and clerical hat, with its scarlet cord and tassel, he is the very personification of a dignified churchman.

Though the sacred music of Italy has degenerated to a florid theatrical style, the Priore Bartelone has the good taste to prefer the more solemn strain of ancient choral harmony, and to

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appreciate even our Handel. The declared purpose of his annual visit is to hear "He was despised," which is a great pleasure to sing for him, for he deeply feels its heart-rending pathos.

It is easy to imagine the influence such ecclesiastics acquire amongst their flocks, and how they become the oracles and counsellors of every household.

To give you an idea how matches are made in Italy, and what share the clergy take in them, I must detail what occurred to us some years ago at Venice.

We had become acquainted with a learned monk, an agreeable man, who occasionally called on us. One Sunday morning, above all days, the padre was announced, just as we had finished breakfast. The servant said, he wished "to speak to the colonel," of which my nieces and I gladly availed ourselves, to retire and prepare for church, but before I had time to put on my shawl, I was called back; "it was *la signora* he wanted." After some embarrassment, a little circumlocution, and sundry compliments to the fair daughters of England, the good man opened his subject. "He had some valued friends, persons of wealth and consideration, who possessed an only son; they wished him to marry an English wife; they had

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commissioned him to inquire if I knew of any young lady who would like to form such an alliance ; fortune was immaterial ; she should have a palace in town, and a villa in the country ; an equipage at her own disposal ; ample pin-money *(spillatico)*, and a box at the opera, if she required it, but they rather hoped an English wife would have the good taste to pass her evenings at home !"

I listened with due attention, suppressed a smile, and assured the padre, that I thought the proposal might tempt many, but that I knew of no young lady, at that moment I could recommend. The difference of religion, I said, would be an insuperable objection to most English girls ; none, who were well brought up, or worthy of esteem, would change, and we had Scriptural authority for not being "unequally yoked." The padre's face lengthened as I spoke, but he returned to the charge, and poured forth a long panegyric on his young Cœlebs, summing up all with the assurance, that he was an angel ! which I assured him I did not in the least doubt ; in fact, that he had prepossessed me strongly in favour of his friends. It was flattering, I said, to find an Italian family, of worth and distinction, seeking an English partner for their son, and I

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was gratified to know that our domestic habits were beginning to be appreciated, and the demoralizing theatre falling into disrepute. The padre's countenance rose again, and he recommended his suit once more in the most seducing tones, "assuring me that difference of religion should not stand in the way—the young people would soon think alike, and that we, with our large connections, must certainly know some estimable young lady—the youth was an angel, &c." However, it was getting late for church—I heard our gondoliers under the window; I assumed a firmer tone, and persisted that I could recommend no young lady of our persuasion to marry out of her church and country; but at Rome and Naples he would find many highly respectable Roman Catholic families, to whom his proposal might prove acceptable; I then rose, and the monk was obliged, reluctantly to retire. But he came again before the week was over, and renewed his suit more vehemently; "his friends were deeply disappointed, they were in fact waiting in Venice for our decision!!!" The wily churchman had nearly betrayed himself, but I resolved not to understand him, nor deviate from the course I had pursued before. He tried again and again to throw me off my guard; urged me to give him

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hopes, with all the earnestness of a lover pleading for himself, and pushed the matter so far, that I was obliged to tell him plainly our opinions, before I succeeded in convincing him that no consideration of interest could tempt us, where there was a difference of religion. Difference of habit is another serious evil in marrying abroad. Even at this moment, I cannot say I know a single example of an English woman being happily married in this country. Even if her partner be amiable, even if he be domestic, which is still rarer, she has annoyances to suffer from his family on account of her religion, and she discovers, too late, what she is to endure, in seeing her children baptized in another faith, and educated in what she must consider error; besides the misery, if the family she has entered into be zealous, of beholding her delicate offspring half starved with fasts and vigils, before they have strength to bear the discipline. I have witnessed such a case, and seen the sickly emaciated children, and their drooping mother pining over them, without the power of alleviation! The picture is from life.

The monk left us in evident vexation; the hint he had dropped about his friends awaiting our decision at Venice, suggested the possibility of their being lodged in our hotel, and calling the

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waiter, I ascertained, that before coming to us, the padre had been visiting a gentleman and his son from Padua, who had been some days at the Europa. Name, station, and history were soon told, and found to agree exactly with the monk's representation. I might have inquired of him who they were, for he had bound me in honour not *then* to mention the mission on which he came, fearing, probably, that we should consult our revered friend, the consul-general, whom he well knew would confirm our determination ; but I thought it best not to ask a question, though it was gratifying to know that our nieces' own attractions had suggested the proposal. They were very young, and at least, in our eyes, pretty, modest, interesting looking girls. The young Cœlebs, doubtless, had been there often, which rendered the matter less marvellous. They were highly amused by the proposal.

The following May we left Venice, having promised to remain two or three days at Padua, to see the illustrious governor, General Count Nugent, and his family. One evening, after dinner, they were showing us the environs of the town, in a light open carriage, a rough road caused me so much suffering, that the kind Count set about persuading us to pass the summer at the famous

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Mud-baths, seven miles from Padua, which he said had achieved wonders in injuries of the spine. He urged the experiment with so much warmth, that we promised him to go to Battaglia. The baths are on the road to Ferrara and Bologna, and we were inquiring after apartments, when I, by chance, asked, like the old song, to whom that fine palace on the hill belonged ; I was struck with its appearance the more, because it is built with wings, and much in the style of some of our noble country mansions of the last century. You may imagine what was my surprise when the director of the baths replied—naming the father of our young Cœlebs, within whose premises we were just going unconscientiously to settle ourselves for the summer ! He is lord of the manor, and of all he surveys around. As you may suppose, our plans were instantly changed. Count Nugent has never heard why we disobeyed his friendly injunctions. The cause was too recent to be then divulged, but the youth is long since married, for I felt interest enough about him to inquire.

General Count Nugent is a brave and noble Irishman, highly esteemed in the Austrian service, and now governor of Trieste. He is married to an amiable Neapolitan lady, the Duchess of

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Riario, at whose estates in Calabria he excavated, and discovered a collection of very valuable statues amongst the ruins of a temple of Venus, which is known to have been erected and decorated by Marius, with treasures of art, collected in Greece, when there in command of the Roman legions. These statues we saw before their restoration at Venice. Inquiring lately where they had been placed, Lady Sorell most kindly sent me a beautiful description of the building they now adorn, the Castello de Frangipani, near Tersato, which Count Nugent has made the emporium of so many interesting and beautiful objects, that I must rather reserve telling you about his castle till we have had an opportunity of contemplating them.

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LETTER XVII.

Europa, Lucca.

We have been to the palace at Marlia, this morning, to inquire after the duchess, and carry her royal highness a view of Windsor Castle, which she wished to possess. This august princess, whose heart is full of tenderness and Christian love, evinces a warm interest in the welfare of our royal family. When the health of the queen dowager suffers, she is always solicitous for news of her majesty, and I am sometimes permitted to be the medium of procuring her more particulars than the papers contain. Her sympathy was especially awakened for the extreme youth of our gracious queen, when she came to the throne, and she hears of her majesty's welfare and happiness with lively interest. Her royal highness has more

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than once alluded to the protection her family received from the English, during the war, and named with evident pleasure and high encomiums the captain of the frigate, who conveyed her royal parents, when she was an infant, to Sardinia—I think it was Baisley. The duchess, in speaking of him, and his carrying her in his arms across a river, seemed perfectly to appreciate the noble character of our British sailors. Our visit, this morning, left as usual the happiest impression on our minds.

As we came along the beautiful road to-day, from the baths, I recollected never having described it to you. The first two miles skirt a chesnut forest, till the Serchio comes in sight, just below the meeting of the waters of the Lima—half a mile further, the grand feature of the country rises majestically before the eye; a fine old bridge, with five irregular arches; it is extremely steep, and so narrow, that no carriage can conveniently pass over it; the principal arch measures sixty feet in height, and is circular. A sketch will present what I cannot hope to describe intelligibly. I have, in vain, inquired for the true history of this antiquity. As for its curious proportions, the recent inundation has sufficiently explained the necessity for altitude; the river

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then rose much above the buttresses, and great trees, brought down by the torrent, battered the parapets, and carried them away. A narrow causeway was doubtless a prudential safeguard, as most easily defended, during the middle ages, when every town was opposed to its neighbour, and rivers were natural barriers between contending parties. A certain power, too busy in every country, has the reputation of having finished this bridge in one night. The people relate, that the builder, finding it impossible to construct the great arch, received a proposition from the evil one, offering to complete it, provided the first who passed over, should be surrendered to his gentle mercies. The bridge was finished by next morning, when the mason dexterously managed that a dog should be the first passenger. The tradition goes on to state, that the arch fiend, enraged to find himself outwitted, dashed the animal with such force against the ground, over the great arch, that his body passed through and was carried away by the flood. "The aperture," said my informant, "could never be closed." And there is said to be a hole, under the present pavement, confirming the legend. Professor Roselini, of Pisa, confirmed the fact of this having been the popular belief for ages, and assured us,

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that he had seen an old print, at the royal library, in Paris, engraved by Martin Scheon, in the fifteenth century, which represented this identical bridge, as a causeway over one of Dante's circles in the Inferno, to which the hole in the great arch was made the entrance; and his Satanic majesty stood across it, hurling down the "*anime tetre*" into the gulph beneath. The professor, who is an oracle in matters of history, and a delightful person, could give no other information concerning the bridge, but that he, with Muratori, believed its having been built by the Countess Matilda, in the eleventh century. It has even been attributed to Narses, the Greek general, five centuries earlier, It now bears the name of the Ponte-Maddelena, as a guarantee, I suppose, against the further interference of evil spirits.*

* Signor Matraja, a clever Lucchese artist and antiquary, tells me the bridge was called Maddelena, from an adjoining church, which was degraded to a stable during the French dynasty. He says, before that period, there was an inscription on the bridge, importing its having been *repaired* by Duke Boniface, the father of Countess Matilda, in the year 1001, consequently, its erection must have been of much earlier date. My informant, who is a man of considerable research, has, with much pains and labour, published a map of Lucca, as the city existed in 1200, with all its edifices. He has also traced the Etruscan walls, portions of which are still to be found in the cellars of various dwelling houses. He gives lessons in drawing at the baths.

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The bridge was repaired by Castruccio. The lovers of the picturesque will gladly contemplate the whole scene. The torrent dashing and roaring over its bed of rocks, and belted by this dark and imposing structure, which claims an existence of seven hundred years or more, and whose construction is even attributed to evil agency. The town beyond is the emporium of the mountain commerce, in silk, wool, and hemp, with its convents, ancient churches, fir and pine trees. It is flanked to the east by smiling hills, covered with vines and olives; to the north and west, the view is closed by lofty mountains, richly clothed in chesnut forests, and beyond are the Appenines crowned with snow. As we passed the bridge, this morning, the Serchio, flowing with a strong current, bore on its waves a file of picturesque rafts, whose progress was frequently impeded by rocks and shallows. It was highly exciting to watch their descent, now floating proudly and steadily along, the next moment struggling over a reef, barely covered by the foaming current, then free, and bounding forwards with augmented impetuosity. Such is the life of man—

"Poor child of danger, nursling of the storm."

Each was guided by a pair of half naked moun-

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taineers, with long poles. These rafts carry no freight; they are themselves the merchandize, and are broken up for exportation on reaching the Serchio's embouchure.

After passing the bridge, the road continues along the river—the rocks rising perpendicularly on receding and giving place again to the chesnut forest. This valley is a prolific field for the botanist, and many of the flowering shrubs of our English gardens, are recognised amongst the rocky declivities which flank the road. The labernum, rarely seen in Italy, is here saluted as an old acquaintance—heaths, and the yellow broom, claim the same privilege. This road, now so level and beautiful, was a noble work, and required much good engineering before completed, by Princess Bacciocchi. A straggling path along the mountain side, which required a day's toil to scramble over from Lucca, was the only ingress to the happy valley, the fame of whose waters, even in the middle ages, attracted great personages to surmount the difficult access. It is on record, that they were visited by the Emperor, Frederick II. in 1245, and there is a tradition of the Gonzagas having frequented them. The old Lucchese, several of whose villas still surround the palace, probably thought their republic was

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safer for not attracting too many foreigners, otherwise they would have constructed a road, and opened the baths to the world, to enrich the state, as they now do considerably.

A succession of little walled towns, and picturesque villages, adorn the mountain side, at intervals of two miles, they are called Diecimo, Val' d' Ottavo, and Sesto, according to their distances from the capital, and have borne these appellations from the time of the Romans. Diecimo gives its name to a new stone bridge. The road from thence descends with the river, through a wider valley, luxuriant in vegetation—the mountains covered with chesnuts—the nearer hills rich in olive and vines—the higher Appenines covered with snow, during several months of the year. Every turn presents a varied and beautiful landscape. The marble colonade, an architectural edifice, attracts the eye, crowning the summit of a lofty hill to the left. It is the convent of the *angeli*—the abode of a few monks, who beg about the country from their poorer neighbours. The situation is, as usual, most salubrious, and the view beautiful. Any royal traveller, of *either* sex, or pious votary, disposed to visit them, and present an offering, are accommodated with *portantini* chairs. Within four miles of the city, the

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road turns to Marlia, the summer residence of the amiable sovereigns of Lucca, in the midst of an English park, of three miles circumference; its French appellation is derived from its water-works, the taste of Princess Bacciocchi. We once passed an autumn in a delightful villa adjoining Marlia, where we were often permitted to enjoy the society of its august inmates, The villa belonged to the Diodati family, as an inscription in the great saloon records. A Lucchese nobleman of that name, took refuge in Geneva during the time of the Reformation, and made that beautiful translation of the Scriptures into Italian, which the Jews esteem the most faithful, and the Italians read as a class-book in their Universities, though it is strongly prohibited by the church.

The ramparts of Lucca, once her protection, now her zone of beauty, are three miles in circumference, forming a broad terrace, and adorned with lofty trees. The bastions are laid out with walks and seats. The view from this noble esplanade forms a magnificent panorama—the richest plain lies beneath the eye, studded with picturesque farm-houses. These are at this season completely covered with Indian corn, hanging in rich clusters and festoons, above, below, and around, to ripen in the autumnal sun, giving to the scene

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an assurance of luxurious plenty, and a happy feeling of security, worthy of the golden age. Vines and olives also, the staple commodity of Lucca, ripen in profuse abundance around. Beyond these farms appear innumerable villas on the rising grounds, embosomed in woods, and above are seen the magnificent Appenines which encircle the plain. A beautiful aqueduct erected by the Queen of Etruria, extends to the foot of the mountains, and supplies the city with water from the purest springs. The rich cultivation of the land, verifies the duchy's claim to its ancient title of *Lucca the industrious.*

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LETTER XVIII.

Europa, Lucca.

We came on here yesterday from Marlia to visit an old acquaintance, and to see the annual exhibition of arts and trades, which opens to-day.

Lucca is a city of great interest, but it can scarcely be called a BYE-WAY, therefore, I must resign its description to learned travellers, and to Mr. Murray, who announces a hand-book, which will, I feel assured, surpass all other travelling guides in useful information, and leave nothing to be wished on the high-roads. A persevering artist has traced the Etruscan walls round this city, by penetrating to the cellars of dwelling-houses, and any antiquary may find the ancient Doric amphitheatre, who has zeal enough to explore the present fish market. The cathedral is

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amongst the finest of Italy, and the most ancient, for it dates as far back as 1060. It was commenced by the prelate, afterwards Alexander II., who blest the consecrated banner with which William the Conqueror invaded England.

Lucca possesses objects of interest to amuse and occupy a traveller for two or three days, and this hotel affords comforts enough to detain him for a longer period. It is a Pagnini establishment, clean, moderate, and well appointed.*

After tea, last night, we went out to see our Genoa friend, the Marchese di Negro, and his interesting daughter, Madame Balbi, who came here for change of air. They had been to visit us last week at the baths, when I saw, for the first time, this remarkable man, whom I call friend, but we had corresponded before ; he is in fact the *improvisatore* who visited England during the peace of Amiens, and astonished even our universities with his talent for pouring forth extempore poetry. You may have heard me speak of my excellent and accomplished Tuscan governess, Mrs. Combe's enthusiasm about her

* Pagnini has three excellent hotels at the baths, and a valuable English wife, who well knows the comforts British travellers require, and no reasonable family ever left their houses dissatisfied. The Europa, at Lucca, now belongs to their nephew.

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compatriot. He was intimately acquainted with her and her sister, Maria Cosway, whose house in Stratford-place, was then the rendezvous of all the talents,* from the Italian opera singer to the Prince of Wales. Mrs. Combe used to be the person selected to accompany the Marchese di Negro on the harp, when he extemporized; and I surprised him the other day by showing him the actual airs and accompaniments she then used for calling forth and assisting his muse. His facility in similies was wonderful. As a trial of skill, some one defied him to compare a lady to a pair of boots, in which he succeeded very ingeniously. I reminded him of the circumstance, telling him I hoped the boots were without spurs; he laughed, and repeated his impromptu, promising to let me have it. He then sang for us to the harp; the subject was, the pleasure of meeting old friends, for he insists on having seen us in England, even before some of us were born.

During a short visit to Genoa, in 1835, we saw his villetta, a beautiful mansion, constructed in

* These ladies were the daughters of a follower of the house of Stuart. Mrs. Cosway became directress of a great institute for female education at Lyons, under the patronage of Napoleon. After his fall, she removed to Loda, and superintended a similar establishment till her recent death.

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one of the bastions of the old walls, with a romantic garden, terraces, temples, statues, and busts inscribed to many of his brother poets and other distinguished men.

Within the dwelling are many beautiful objects of art, and a good library, but the spirit that would have annimated all was wanting; the Marchese had gone to Milan to hear Malibran, and his absence was a great loss to us, for he is most hospitable and kind, and lives, I understand, in good style and taste. One can generally judge of the disposition of a master by his household; the servants of the Marchese di Negro did their utmost to compensate to us for their lord's absence, showing us his grounds, his favourite works of art, his harp, his books, and even presenting us with his last work; requesting us to visit the villetta again and again, and assuring us of their master's disappointment, and how much they regretted he was not at home to receive us. We had not long returned from that journey when I received a very gracious letter to the same effect from the Marchese, sending me a beautifully bound copy of his sermons, in verse, the subjects from Scripture. He appears to be a man of piety, and is estimable, I believe, in all the relations of life. When we went to visit him at his

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hotel, last night, he had some music ready for us, for which he had sent to Genoa, with his own translations of some of the most beautiful of Moore's Irish Melodies. He told us he hoped soon to inaugurate the bust of *Andrea Doria*, the hero of Genoa. On these occasions he gives a fête, his grounds are illuminated, and he, or some of his gifted friends, pronounce an oration, or eulogium, in verse, on the personage to be honoured, whose bust is then crowned, and placed among the *élite*. Thus it is that Italy consoles herself for many deprivations, glorying in what no political change can ever deprive her of—the immortal genius of her sons!

The last inauguration was the bust of Gagliuffi, the Dalmatian, who, after pursuing his studies in Rome, under Monti and Solari, became a sound lawyer, an elegant Latin poet, and brilliant improvisatore of the Arcadia in Rome, gifts rarely united. Genoa had been the scene of his achievements in jurisprudence during the dominion of the French; and again, in his latter days, he pursued the profession of the law with success, but without profit, for he had too feeling a heart to enrich himself by the ruin of others, and in fact, lived and died in indigence. He was a renowned champion of the ancient language of

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Latium, and used all his eloquence in endeavouring to persuade Italy, that literary excellence depended on its restoration, (the Latin had been cultivated from 1300, by which the vulgar tongue was purified, but Italian again became deteriorated from the reign of Louis XIV., when Italy was inundated with French literature), and Gagliuffi was indefatigable in conjuring his adopted countrymen to return to the cultivation of that language, whose unshaken foundations were established by the writers of the Augustan age.

You will be interested in hearing that the oration for the inauguration of Gagliuffi's bust was composed and pronounced by that elegant and accomplished scholar, the Marchese Brignoli Sale, whom you saw with his family at the queen's coronation. He is one of those noble and cultivated Italians, who remind us of what Italy was in the days of her pride. His palace, at Genoa, is adorned with splendid pictures, and many of the Genoese school. It was our great resource, and rendered the more agreeable by his gracious reception, the charming manners of his agreeable consort, and the endearments of an interesting daughter, then a child, but speaking our language perfectly. The house of Brignoli is equally dis-

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tinguished for manly beauty and female purity, in all its branches, of whom we know any thing.

Another source of satisfaction, during our too short séjour at Genoa, was the Pallavicini family. The Marchese Fabio came daily to offer us kindness and information. His son, then a young man of seventeen, is a beautiful artist, without knowing the use of a pencil !—he uses a pair of scissars. Every evening he came to us, our albums were in a few minutes enriched with groups of figures, knights tilting, buffalo hunting, or some interesting scene from history, executed *al improvviso* in cut paper, without any previous sketch, and full of life and spirit. A great bronze lamp, on his grandmother's reading-table, has a shade in compartments of double coloured glass ; between each is a subject on black paper, executed by the young Fabio, which filled us with wonder and admiration. One was the fall of the angels, the others generally complicated mythological groups ; all were extraordinary compositions, and executed in a style which, in one so young, may be attributed to inspiration.

" Come to us this evening," said his father, a day or two after our arrival, " it is my mother's receiving night." We went with little better *toilette* than our travelling dresses, only expecting to

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meet the dozen or twenty persons usually assembled at Italian weekly receptions. You may imagine our amazement to find a society of above two hundred, and the most brilliant native assemblage we had ever seen in Italy. The Marchesa Teresa is a highly intellectual person ; she has been, during a long life, the queen of Genoese society. When I told her, the brilliant circle around me, recalled what Genoa must have been in former days, she sighed, and I lamented having touched a string which vibrated sadly. It is lamentable to think of the part English diplomacy had in thus humbling them. Surely it was an error in judgment, and contrary to England's usual procedure.

The Marchesa's reception was fuller on that evening, in compliment to Princess Centola, a very beautiful Neapolitan lady, who was then at Genoa with her husband ; they were on their way to England, where, probably, you heard of her beauty and amiability. Her fair hair and blonde complexion are remarkable for an Italian, and must have created surprise in London. She is the daughter of Prince Avellino, and niece to Prince Doria. We have long known her family, and esteemed her as an exemplary wife and mother. She had ten fine children when we met at

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Genoa, and still looked like a girl. We used to call her noble boys the young Gracchi.

There is now open in Lucca a beautiful exhibition of her various works of art, and the usual lottery to dispose of them. A few lire, (paid monthly, by instalments, for the convenience of all classes) entitle the subscriber to a ticket, and a chance of several very beautiful prizes. Inlaid tables, and cabinets, equal to the antique, suits of Lucca damask, carpets, pieces of silk, for dresses, and cloth for coats, hats, gloves, cloaks, watches, and all sorts of native manufacture.

The silk-looms of Lucca, once three thousand in number, had sadly declined till the reign of the Princess Eliza Bacciocchi, who restored a portion to activity. The firm of Burlamachi employs some hundred hands between silk-weaving and manufacturing Greek caps. In this Fabbrica we have seen gold and silver stuffs weaving for Constantinople, and damask hangings, worthy of the good old times, real Rokoko, with which the palace of Lucca is furnished. The silk and satins of Lucca are also excellent for ladies' wear. Those red caps, which we call Greek, have been always exported from Lucca. They are knit by children, of coarse, unbleached wool, to a great

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length, and by milling, reduced to mere skull-caps, before they receive the fine red dye. Lucca has also attained celebrity for ladies' shoes. A certain Raffaello Lombardi, who is really a Raphael amongst shoe-makers, has orders from all parts of Italy, and from Germany.

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LETTER XIX.

Villa Brodrick.

THE extent of the duchy of Lucca, is only 328 square miles, including mountains that are not habitable, and tracts covered with water. This small Appenine territory, which possesses no level country, except a plain of six miles around the city, counts the enormous population of 172,830, or 526 to the square mile! the largest, I believe, in the world, and increasing annually. It is a problem for the political economists to solve, how a little mountain state can support such a population; and, I believe, the secret lies in its still deserving its ancient title, that of "Lucca the industrious," and possessing the most honest, upright, and cleanly people of the south; many attribute their better morals to the good teaching

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of a wise and sober republic. The largest portion of the population, live entirely on the vegetable productions of the state. Some thousands emigrate annually. We are well acquainted in England with the venders of plaster casts; and how many little monkey-boys, in reply to an inquiry from whence they come, touch their hats and answer, "*Da Lucca per servirla.*" There is not a family in the mountains around, who have not one or two of these peripatetic merchants wandering over Europe, who, in time, return with a long purse, to aid those who have remained at home, or to marry and build good houses for themselves. The passports granted during the last year, to these *figuristi* alone, amounted to 657.

The Maremma, a tract of country running along the sea coast, between Leghorn and Civita Vecchia, once richly cultivated, and the site of many beautiful Etruscan cities, has been, for centuries, nearly depopulated, by the prevalence of malaria. The indefatigable efforts of the Grand Duke of Tuscany are now devoted to having the country drained and generally cultivated. Temptations are held out annually to labourers, to emigrate there in the winter season, and we often see whole families of Lucchese mountaineers, who have

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been early in autumn, assisted by their friendly neighbours, to till and sow their little patch of land, going forth laden with their extra wearables and indispensable kettles, and often driving a large flock of sheep, or picturesque goats, before them, to travel some 150 miles into the Maremma, to earn a few scudi, and find better pasture for their herds. Fathers of families, and grown up sons, often go into the Roman states, also; this last year, many of the poor people never returned, or returned emaciated with fever; for malaria has prevailed more than usual in all the districts infected by it, in consequence of five months without rain, and the recent movement of the earth, in the Maremma, naturally awakens miasma.* Of nearly 4000 who go forth every

* We have often succeeded in removing ague and fever in this country, with small doses of flour of sulphur, one third of an ounce in a glass of wine, every morning the fit is expected. We first ascertained its efficacy when the Royal Dragoons were quartered in Kent. The soldiers who were sent to the Romney marshes, to aid the preventive service, always returned with fever. The sick men went into hospital, while their wives and children trusted to our skill, and in most cases, they were well long before those who were taking quinine in the regimental hospital. In England we gave the sulphur in a glass of beer. I have tried the specific in the Pontine marshes, where the guards at the frontier look dropping into the grave—the hue of death in their faces. When our travelling stock of sulphur was exhausted, I was obliged to tell them what to ask for at

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winter, it is reckoned that each man brings home, on an average, four pounds of our money to better the condition of his family.

The passports granted for Corsica alone, last year, amounted to 2,900. The Lucchese labourers work as masons in that island, and are employed in wood-croft clearing, fencing, and every agricultural pursuit, which handy workmen can accomplish in winter; but it is a wild lawless country, infested with banditti; they live hardly, sleeping at best, in sheds of their own construction, covered with peat, where they are often assailed by the outlaws, who salute them with "Casa di Lucca, caccia la polenta,* o ti tombo," literally, "House of Lucca, feed us, or we'll kill you." So, the poor emigrants purchase life and peace for a mess of porridge, and are often re-

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the chemists. The poor sufferers said they would take our prescription with confidence, for any one of them, who had money and leave, to go to the sulphur springs, always recovered. In fact, the numerous sulphur waters in Italy, seem to say that Providence placed them here as an antidote to some prevailing disease. Our panacea succeeded in Rome, also. One poor woman, who returned in a week, restored to health and colour, reproached us, saying, she was a greater sufferer than before, for now she was hungry and had no bread—during the fever she wanted none.

*Polenta is the flour of India corn, or chesnuts, boiled to a paste, and turned out on the table-cloth. It is excellent when cut in pieces and fried.

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warded with a share of a wild boar, or a chevreuil, in return, on condition they cook a portion for the enemy, who are too wild and unsettled to own a home or even a shed.

Corsica has been for years the sanctuary of Italian delinquents—whoever could escape the arm of the law, usually fled there, and joined the straggling banditti which infest the woods, to the terror of the natives, and annoyance of English sportsmen, who are sometimes allured, by the temptation of abundant game, to approach near their haunts.

Mr. Wood, who has married a dear niece of ours, is a keen sportsman. Thinking "a rich guerdon waits on minds that dare," he ventured to Corsica, two or three winters ago, accompanied by two friends. They crossed in December, to Bastia, in a small steamer of forty horse power, crowded with labourers, from Lombardy and these states. They carried provisions, and hoped to find a country boat to coast to the south, where game abounds, but there were none to be had, and they were obliged to take the steamer to Alesio. A storm during the voyage, obliged them to go on shore at night, at some risk of being surprised by banditti. The sailors agreed to keep guard in turn. The sportsmen hearing a

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noise towards morning, started up, armed themselves, supposing they were attacked, but it proved to be only the mariners getting out the vessel. They at lenth reached the mouth of the river Tavignano, and sounded for entrance, but were driven on a sand bank, the waves beating them about in no pleasant style. After much labour from all hands, they got into smooth water again, made for the landing place, and walked a mile and a half along the river to a fortress, in which they were provided with a billet, and leave to occupy a part of the building, not required by the custom-house officers. They had a long room, with a fire-place, forms, and a table, two dormitories with bedsteads and coverlets. They had taken their own bedding, but there were no cooking utensils, and they were obliged to have recourse to the vessel, and purchased what could be spared. Their dogs occupied a corner of the long room, their servant cut down abundance of wood, and kept up a good fire night and day. Their guns supplied their table, in addition to the portable soup, Westphalia hams, and tongues they had carried with them. Lest they should tire of game, their cook dressed them partridges as veal cutlets, which would have deceived a Véry. They killed, in a few weeks, two wild boars, a stag,

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some chevreuil, with partridges, pheasants, and wood cocks, innumerable, but they had seen nothing of the brigands, and feared being obliged to leave the island without an adventure. At length, one evening after sunset, Mr. Wood having strayed from his companions, was about four miles from the fort, and was crossing a woody, rocky glen, when he perceived a man at a distance, with something on his shoulder—he had never before encountered other than shepherds, and being alone, he thought it wisest to alter his course, and avoid him. Supposing he had succeeded, he was startled some time after, by a voice from amongst the trees, accosting him with the usual "Serva Signor," and inquiring if he had good sport. He was at the moment enveloped in thick brush-wood, and would not reply till he had cleared the coppice, and attained an open space, he then, but without stopping, returned the salutation, and made the same inquiry. "We are not sportsmen," was the reply. "What then are you?" "Banditti," was the unhesitating answer! Two others came up at the moment—all three were armed to the teeth, with guns on their shoulders, pistols and stilettoes in their sashes—the latter had carved ivory handles. Mr. Wood was fully aware of the awkwardness of his postion, but

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felt no alarm, telling the brigands cooly to keep their distance, and cocked both barrels of his good fowling piece. In reply to their inquiries, "where were his friends," he answered, "they were in the neighbourhood." They also asked to look at his gun, but he said "it was a rule of his, never to let it out of his hand." He then entered freely into conversation with the out-laws, and told them he was glad to meet with some of them before he left the island, regretting their position, to which they frankly replied, that they had often seen him and his companions. "And why did you conceal yourselves," he asked. "Because we thought you were French voltigeurs, disguised as sportsmen, and in pursuit of us!" but they had recently discovered the gentlemen to be strangers. They acknowledged that some of them were fugitive galley slaves from Italy, but that many were Corsicans of rival families, where murders had occurred. One said he had been seven years wandering through the woods, never resting two nights in the same place, and fortunate if he could find a sheep-shed to defend him from the weather. The shepherds favor them through fear. After twenty minutes conversation, they asked for a trifle in money, to assist them to escape. Mr. Wood tried his pockets,

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but had left his purse behind by chance; he regretted also, the provisions in his pouch being gone, and said he would bring them something next day—"they hoped his companions would come also"—they then asked for some powder, he threw them his powder-horn, and made them return it in the same way, always keeping the same distance between them; he offered them shot, but they said they saw he had little. He then took leave of the unfortunate men, advising them to seek a better manner of life, and went away, determined to keep his promise for the morrow. An assurance that nothing unpleasant would occur, perhaps proved his safe guard, by rendering him firm and fearless.

The weather had generally been mild, there had been only one day's frost—but on the morrow, there fell torrents of rain, and the following day the sportsmen had fixed for their departure. The custom-house officers said, had Mr. Wood gone with his companions, the brigands would have seized them, put a large price on their heads, and have obliged them to send one away to bring their ransom.

I have ran over this adventure, as Mr. Wood recounted it to us, to amuse your young sportsmen; and I have detailed the kind of accommoda-

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tion which Corsica affords, for the information of those whose love of shooting might tempt them so far.

An English gentleman, in the year before, had left his yacht on the coast, and gone to shoot in the woods with his boy. Three men with black faces and guns came up, and asked him to join them in a boar hunt; he declined, saying he did not like that kind of sport—they then civilly offered to accompany him, which he also declined, asking why their faces were blackened, they answered, "to get near the boar." He went on his way, and soon lost sight of them. Later in the day, he was suddenly commanded, "stop and throw down your gun, or you are a dead man," and looking up, he discovered the same three men peeping over the rocks, with their guns pointed at him. Not knowing the moment the old guns might go off, he asked what they wanted—"Money," was the reply—he had but a few francs. They said they must have 10,000!! or otherwise they would kill him—he replied he could not command so much—they then lessened their demand to 8000, with threats, and then to 6000, declaring they would shoot him, but he still persevered in refusing their demand, till it fell to 300, and he only then consented to give them that, to

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console the frightened boy, whom he dispatched to his servant on board his yacht, with an order for the sum. The brigands warned him to bring no one back, as he valued his master's life. The money was counted to them on the rocks—they never attempted to take his gun.

The French government have lately entered into a treaty with Lucca, which will prevent all malefactors, and even fraudulent bankrupts, from finding a refuge in Corsica.*

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* Some curious incidents, demonstrating more than any thing I have hitherto related—the barbarous state of Corsica—have come to our knowledge since the above was written.

Amongst the poor labourers of these mountains, who emigrate in winter, there is one who went to Corsica a dozen years ago, and returned, with his leg so fearfully contracted, that he has been lame, and incapable of much work ever since. The story told to account for the accident runs thus :—

The year before, being, as usual, working up the country, in that island, the recurrence of Easter brought with it longings after home, which he expressed before his landlady on the Saturday night, wishing he could see how his parents and family were, even for a few minutes ; the dame had the reputation, which is not uncommon in Corsica, of being a witch, and instantly offered to send him to his home at once, if he would implicitly do her bidding.

She then brought a large earthen vessel, filled with water, over which she performed an incantation, and telling him *that* was now the sea, she desired him to leap over it, and find himself at home ; previously, however, warning him not to commend himself to the saints, or think of any thing holy during the transit, or he would

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inevitably fall into the deep, and be drowned. The man accordingly gave a jump, and, as the legend reports, found himself at his own door, in the form of a cat!!

The door was closed, however, and he was too large a grimalkin to pass through the hole left for the domestic puss. He could distinctly hear his friends making merry within, and yearning to be amongst them, he mewed for admission. The portal was immediately opened, but the entrance of a gigantic stranger proved unwelcome, and instead of caresses he received kicks, from all but his mother, who, as if there was something at her heart which pleaded for her son, even in the shape of a cat, expostulated in his behalf, and desired them to let the creature alone, adding, "who can tell what he may be." But his brother, annoyed at having his merriment disturbed, seized one of the round stones, between which chesnut cakes are baked, and hurling it at the intruder, maimed him for life.

How the cat returned to Corsica, and to his own shape again, I know not. He came back from that island the following May, with a contracted limb, and he has been lame ever since. His neighbours say, the rumour of his adventure with the witch having preceded him, he was excluded from the church till penances were performed, and a sum of money sent to Rome, to purchase his absolution. I questioned his nephew as to the fact, and he repeated the story to me as I have here detailed it, assuring me it is still believed in the family, but that his uncle is silent if ever his metamorphose is alluded to.

A circumstance more deeply associated with the necromancy of the dark ages has also been reported to us. Another Lucchese peasant, who was labouring in Corsica, happened to please too well one of these spell-working women, who, observing that he was a faithful husband, and that she had no chance of making him forget his young wife at home, more than once charged him to bring her a lock of his Teresa's hair, when he returned next year. Happening, just before his departure, to find the witch asleep, with her head upon the table, her long black hair hanging loose about her, he was tempted to cut off a tress, in order to play her, what he supposed, a harmless trick. On his return to the island the following autumn, the

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Corsican did not fail to ask for what he had promised to bring her. "Here it is," he said, producing her own ebon lock. "It is just the colour of mine," added the woman. "Yes," he replied, "you remember I always told you my wife's hair resembled yours." The hair was eagerly seized and a spell performed, which it was intended should consume the tress, and his wife's life together. The work of decay commenced, but the wicked contriver was its victim. After declining some weeks, she began to suspect she had been imposed upon, and sent for a sister in the art to dissolve the charm, but it was too late: and if my tale run true, she died, whilst no harm assailed the innocent wife and her husband, who returned home, shocked at the result, but thankful for their preservation.

That such things are practised in Corsica there are abundant instances to prove; and that those who go there bring home a fearful credence of their truth, is equally certain. It is remarkable, that Corsagna, one of the romantic villages, only five miles distant from the Bagni, and known to have been named and peopled by a colony from Corsica, still inherits the vices of the mother country, which even close contact with the moral and peaceable Lucchese have not as yet reformed.

A youth coming out of church, last spring, having snatched a rose from the breast of a young companion, had the stab of a stiletto in return. A son who expostulated with an erring father, for neglect of a drooping mother, received a ball through the heart.

Strife and contention are, in fact, increasing amongst them.

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LETTER XX.

Villa Brodrick.

ALTHOUGH I trust I have not yet exhausted the interest you feel in this little duchy, you will be glad to hear that we have just arranged a tour, in which you shall participate to the utmost. We are going to Volterra, the most interesting city of the Etruscan league, and to the Boiling Lakes, whence the sal borax, so important in our manufactories, is derived, and from thence we shall proceed by Colle, to St. Gemignano, and to Certaldo, on a visit to the Marchesa Lenzoni Medici, who has restored the ancient residence of Boccaccio. This tour will, I trust, supply abundant new matter to amuse your young readers.

The grand subject of interest, now in Italy, is ancient Etruria, and our first stage is one of its

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principal cities. Doctor Johnston is accused of writing his tour to the Hebrides before he started. I must, in some degree, follow his example, and lay before you the little we have learnt of the ancient people, while I have authorities near me to consult.

Had I written to you during our last tour, I should have much to say of the Etruscans, and their lost language. My journal, with several notes collected from general reading, and the conversation of our antiquarian friends, fill a volume; but the subject has since been in better hands—my valued friend, Mrs. Hamilton Gray, has given her "Sepulchres of Etruria" to the world, and supplied descriptions of cities, which are, for the most part, inaccessible to me, in consequence of their elevated position and want of carriageable roads. Besides, few possess the spirit of research and erudition she has brought to bear on a subject as involved in mystery and speculation as it is deeply interesting. I should vainly have attempted to supply the various information with which her volume abounds, but I shall gladly reap the advantage of your being already sufficiently *Etruscanized* to enjoy the lighter matters I may lay before you. While my friend has explored a mine, over which the ocean

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of time has flowed for two thousand years, and has brought up the richest treasures of the deep, I have only skimmed the surface, and collected some of the lighter trifles which float there. The subject is new, even in Italy, and becomes more and more developed from day to day, as fresh excavations are made, and ancient authors brought forward. What I have more recently learned from these sources, and the conversation of that living Encyclopedia, Professor Orioli, whose society we have revelled in at two congresses; also, what Signor Milliarini, the curator of the Etruscan museum at Florence, and other antiquaries have imparted to me, I shall try to condense for you; though to connect it, I must from time to time repeat historical facts with which all are familiar, for so little is known of Etruscan annals, that the few points ascertained from the history of their ungrateful neighbours, the Romans, are the only *appui* on which to base conjecture.

That "stupid Claudius," as Gibbon calls him, amidst the thousand contradictions of his unfortunate reign, contrived to write twenty books on Etruscan history, which are lost and deplored as a calamity to literature. What, if he forgot them in Britain, during his sixteen days' sojourn there? and what, if they were one day found amongst

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the old parchments of the British Museum? That would indeed be an event—I must suggest the research to Mrs. Hamilton Gray. England is probably the only country in which the emperor tarried, where his manuscripts have never been sought for, and antiquarians have learnt to appreciate their loss from some fragment of an imperial oration, which has thrown marvellous light on the dark page of Etruria's history. The learned also deplore the loss of a work of Aristotle.

An opinion I ventured to form and note down, when we first visited an Etrucian city some years ago, though now questionable in some points, may serve as an exordium to the desultory fragments I have more recently collected.

"The position of Etruria, in the chain of chronology, appears to be the link between Egypt and Greece. Etruria borrowed from the one and communicated to the other—Rome robbed, and eventually conquered all three! Etruria Proper extended from the Arno to the Tiber, possessed colonies as far as Naples, and attained to the highest degree of prosperity and civilization. The Etruscans existed as a nation 1200 years before the Christian era, and until they were overthrown by the growing power of their more ambitious neighbours, the Romans, whose policy it

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became, after profiting to the utmost by their arts and institutions, to conquer, and jealously to exterminate them for ever. Their history is nearly unknown—their language is lost—they exist but in their tombs!"

I should only weary you were I to relate the dissentions of modern antiquaries, respecting the origin and civilization of this great people. The Hellenists, and those who have imbibed the Greek mania, deny their claim to early supremacy, and assert that Etruria owes every thing to Greece, whereas Valeriani, a high name in such matters, says that even agriculture passed from the Etruscans to the Phœnicians, and from them to the Greeks, contemporaneously with the Egyptians, sturdily supporting his country's claim to the highest antiquity. In allusion to a part of Italy being denominated Magna Grecia, he adds, "Did you ever hear, sapient reader, of a daughter's being called *Great* in opposition to her mother? If Magna Grecia had been the offspring of Greece, she had never been so designated; ergo, Greece is the younger progeny of Italy." Diodorus Siculus declares, that the empire of the world was divided between the Indians and Etruscans, the former possessing all the eastern continent, the latter, the western; and Orioli, who is an oracle

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of antiquity, holds the opinion even now, that the dominion of Etruria extended at one time from Sicily to Vienna. In addition to these contradictory assertions, we have just received the prospectus of a work by Mazzoldi, who has ransacked the past, and brought every author from Homer downwards, to prove that Italy was peopled immediately after the deluge, and sent light and civilization, with the knowledge of the true God, not only to Greece, but to Egypt and Phœnicia. A part of this hypothesis may be borne out by the popular tradition, that Noah, when scared from the east by the dissentions of his elder sons, followed Japhet into Europe, and peopled this peninsula with his descendants. The earliest name which mythology associates with Etruria, is that of Janus, while history* places him first in a list of fifty Etruscan kings. He was the acknowledged founder of Etruria, and after him Italy was called Janiculum. Janus is, by some antiquaries, admitted to have been father Noah, to whom fable might well accord two faces, for he lived between the old and the new world, and saw both. The patriarch was also denominated Enotro, or the discoverer of wine, and

* Dempster's.

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Enotria is one amongst the many appellations by which this country was designated. Mythology also travestied him into the Indian Bacchus, in honour of his invention; and the poets describe him as Saturn, establishing the golden age in Italy. There are many other striking analogies brought forward in favour of the patriarch and his descendants having sojourned here, besides the vases discovered at the ancient Vetulonia, of which I shall tell you hereafter. I shall only now remark, that the Etruscan—the earliest coin of Italy, bears the head of Janus, from whom the Romans adopted it, and that the obverse is the prow of a ship; may not this symbol identify Janus with Noah? The ark could not be represented by one more appropriate, and when so much is left to speculation, an opinion may be hazarded; but the prow is generally supposed to indicate the maritime character of the Etruscans. It was by them navigation was first introduced, and to them the invention of the anchor is also attributed.

Tyrrhene is another ancient name of Italy, and accounted for by Herodotus, who relates the following pretty story. In the reign of Atys, King of Lydia, there was a famine in the land; as an expedient to divert the cravings of hunger, the

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Lydians had recourse to novel amusements, and ingeniously invented dice, bowls, and many of the games since used by the Etruscans and Greeks. One day they played and fasted—the next day they ate; and thus were eighteen years beguiled. But the famine increased, and the king found another expedient necessary; he divided the people into two parts, one half were to remain with him, the other to emigrate with his son Tyrrhenus. After casting lots, those fated to go departed, and for a time remained on the coast where Smyrna now stands. They afterwards built ships, and ultimately settled in Umbria, where they erected cities, and adopted the name of Tyrrhene, after the prince who had been their guide. Dionysius contradicts, but Strabo, Pliny, Plutarch and others, support this detail. To the Lydians, identified with the Etruscans, are attributed the first gold and silver coinage, and the invention of many musical instruments.

An origin for the Etruscans, far more rational than any of these, is the one which I discovered in an old work, by an ancestor of the Cini family. That author, by amalgamating various opinions, produces what appears to be a very probable hypothesis. Michael Angelo's ne-

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phew,* he says, had convinced him, by comparison of their works of art, that the early Etruscans had come from Egypt, while Maffei, and some older authorities, had proved, to his perfect satisfaction, that Canaan and Phœnicia had originally sent them forth. To verify both these opinions, he found an old Latin author† to support his own credence, that from Palestine the most important colonies did come, but that they passed through Egypt, and sojourned long enough to acquire the knowledge of Egyptian art, which so strongly characterizes the early Etruscan remains. Thus are many discordant authorities and assertions brought to agree.

Dominico Cini alludes to the tale of Herodotus, and admits that there were Lydians in Italy, but attributes the relation of the story to the monopolizing vanity of Greek authors, whom he observes, are renowned for corrupting both history and tradition, and arrogating to themselves the honour of being the originators of all things.

To account for the Lydians being associated

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* Senator Buonarrotti's sequel to Dempster.

† Francesco Mariani, chap. ii., page 14, De Etruria Metropoli.

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with the early settlers, he supposes those of Palestine may have passed through a country called Lydia, and even colonized it. Of course this erudite author cannot mean to send them to Lydia of Asia Minor. I have been thinking this over, and I remember a Lydia mentioned in Scripture which would have been more in their track; there they might have sojourned, and from thence have brought settlers to Italy. Ezekiel, in describing the ruin of Egypt, and all her allies, by Nebuchadrezzar, says, "Ethiopia, and Libya, and Lydia, and all the mingled people, and Chub, and the men of the land that is in league, shall fall with them by the sword."*

The most remarkable hero of ancient Italy is Tarchon, whom some authors say assisted Æneas against the Rutuli, to establish his penates in Italy, while Niebuhr, Ingherami, and Orioli, quote high authorities for calling him the brother and companion of Tyrrhenus, or identifying him with that hero, ascribe to him the having conciliated the contentions of a semi-barbarous people, and taught them the blessings of peace. To the consumate wisdom of Tarchon is attributed the union of his compatriot Lydians with the abori-

* Ezekiel, chap. xxx. 5.

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gines, Pelasgians, Umbrians, and other colonies, of whom he formed the Etruscan confederation. Many cities besides Tarquinia, Cortona, and Pisa, gloried in claiming him for their founder ; and in proof of his early exertion of mind, Strabo reports him to have been grey from childhood. Tradition has confused this hero and legislator with Tages, the mysterious boy, from whom he is said to have received his inspirations. Probably Tarchon's own precocious wisdom was personified by the poets, under the imaginary form of their juvenile sage, whose story appears to be too fabulous for any thing but ideal existence. I venture this opinion, wondering not to find myself forestalled. In mythology, Tages is styled the son of Genius, the grandson of Jove ; he is said to have started into life from a clod of earth, turned up by the plough, a description which bears me out in deciding the urchin to have been altogether allegorical, or a subterfuge of the legislator. Some authors admit that it was Tarchon who held the plough when Tages came forth from the furrow ; all agree that his mission was to communicate a code of laws, and the " art unteachable" of divination, and to initiate the hero into drawing omens from the flights of birds and from storms and comets. These oracular communications he

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delivered in song; and like the swan, when the radiant boy had sung his last, he laid him down and died—or rather, Tarchon required his aid no more, when he had drawn up his ritual, and established the priesthood, who were to blind the people and hold them in thraldom. Valeriani says, that by no nation was the science of thunder and lightning cultivated and studied so steadfastly as by the Etruscans. The priests found means to render it terrible and fearful to the vulgar. They established the distinction between the thunders of council and of decree—between the supplicatory, monitory, confirmatory, auxiliary, and the menacing. Thunder has been called "the voice of God," and there is a sublimity in the war of elements highly calculated to awe and impress; but it is impossible to feel any sympathy with those who thought they learned their weal or woe from the chirping of birds, or the pecking of the sacred chickens. Much could be said of the system of deceit and fraud practised in every age, to deceive a people who, even now, are supposed to require external objects to stimulate their faith, in a religion of spirit and of truth. I have often wondered that such material evidences are considered necessary to awaken devotion; but as in the days of Tarchon, the error lies in those

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who have set them up, and they will be made responsible.

The principal college of the Aruspices was established at Fiesole, where the priesthood formed their diary of thunder, which they pretended to take word for word from the sacred writings of Tages. The diary formed later for the use of the Romans, who confided implicitly in their auguries, is still extant, and Valeriani gives the diary for the moon of June. The routine is much what we find in the modern Italian Almanac, called Lunario, which always contain predictions of the weather, harvest, health, and remarkable events. The lower classes, at least, have much faith in these predictions, even without the intervention of thunder. The diary is too long to copy; it runs thus* :—

If it thunder on the 1st of the moon, corn will be abundant—barley excepted.

If on the 2d, safety is promised to young mothers and their new-born infants.

If on the 9th, flocks will perish from the incursion of wolves.

If on the 13th, a powerful man is menaced with ruin.

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* Valeriani, "Museo Cheusino."

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If on the 15th, mortality to rats, moles, and locusts will follow; and so on.

The Etruscan priests were accustomed to sell their auguries dearly to the Romans. That people, who were at first but a horde of exiled Etruscans, began emulating, then defying, and finally mastering and oppressing those to whom they owed their existence. The Etruscans distinguished between the thunder of the day and of the night. The first they thought proceeded from Jupiter, the latter from Summanus, the Etruscan Pluto. When lightning came from the east, and slightly scorched, it was considered a happy omen. There were some kinds which could be propitiated by religious ceremonies and offerings; others which mortals could not prevent by any expiation. The roll of heaven's artillery to the right, was always the presage of prosperity; if from the left, the contrary, hence the expression, sinister omen. A place struck by lightning became sacred, and was no longer used for common purposes. Altars were raised there, and the auruspices consecrated it with the sacrifice of a sheep. Pliny says, the Tuscan augurs taught that lightning, when dry, did not ignite, but consumed. There was a kind which had the credit of drying up wine and other liquids, leaving the

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barrels unscathed ; gold, silver, and bronze, also became liquified in cabinets, and even in bags, and neither recepticals were ever scorched, nor the wax seals of the latter melted ! The Etruscans thought burying the skin of a hippopotamus averted lightning. Valeriani quotes Zoroaster, who recommended the Persians the same practice, to prevent their wines being dried up. The Etruscans seem to have discovered the use of the conductor, at least that a rod of iron or a branch of laurel, laid over the casks, was an effectual safeguard.

The Scandinavians and Celts attributed the same influence to thunder, and had also their diary.

Such were the superstitions which the priesthood nurtured to blind and subdue the people to the purposes of despotism, exciting their terrors by mysterious preambles and menaces, and keeping them in utter ignorance ! Would that they had altogether ceased in the world. The worthy Valeriani sums up what he calls his erudite gossippings about thunder, with an eloquent apostrophe to the Gospel, before which, he says, darkness fled, and liberty rendered men equal ; and so it should be, but the powers of evil still oppose that general consummation so devoutly to be wished.

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Let us hope, however, that the time will come, when the freedom of the Gospel will be general—we have all yet much to learn and to unlearn. Doubtless, it is to unite nations and creeds, and to fraternize the hearts of men in Christian love, that this protracted peace, these wonderful facilities for travel, and the stupendous development of science have been vouchsafed.

If not the march of intellect, we can certainly perceive the retreat of prejudice, and a rapid one, since we have been abroad, of which I could give you many striking and interesting proofs, if Tarchon and his auruspices were not now waiting for me to lay before you the rites and customs which resulted from their dark creed.

The religious institutions, however, of the Etruscans, demonstrate a firm belief in the immortality of the soul, and of final retribution, and in many instances their faith in an omnipotent being, to whom the other divinities were but ministers. The Greeks imputed to their gods the evil passions of men, while the Etruscans believed that only good could emanate from divinity.

Professor Milliarini, who occasionally gave us an evening at Florence, says that the Etruscans were a grave, melancholy, and superstitious people, though in conformity with the customs of

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other nations they tried to strip death of its horrors, by introducing feasting and ceremonies at their funerals, and even in their tombs ; and we are indebted to the expense they lavished on their sepulchres, and the treasures of art with which they furnished them, for knowing that such arts and such a people ever existed.

The finer vases belonged to the temples, and were only deposited in the tombs as places of safety, probably when war ravaged the land. In proof of this, the Prince of Canino has always found the most valuable objects in the plainest and least adorned sepulchres, as if they were deemed the most secure sanctuaries, whereas the painted and architectural tombs, Ipogei, contain the more ordinary vases and utensils of Buchero, or unbaked earth. These are modelled and richly ornamented in relievo. They take a high polish, and are jet black, but porous. They are said to have been the manufacture of Volterra, and I hope to find many fine specimens in the museum there. Inghcrami considers them the most ancient, the most diffused, and really Etruscan ; but they have not the strength and solidity of the other kinds of terra cotta, and he supposes they only belonged to the pomps and ceremonies of sepulture. They were used, Milliarini told us,

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at the funeral suppers which were celebrated once a year in the tombs. There appears to be a whole service collected in the Florence museum. One utensil he pointed out, which looked like an asparagus dish! The designs on the vases are in relievo; many are magnificent, and of great size. The Professor told us they were removed from the tombs, being considered unclean. It is a remarkable fact, that humble terra cotta, fragile as it is, serves better to perpetuate traditions than marble or bronze, for time, and its inevitable consequences, damp and rust, have no influence on fictile vases or clay. It is the only substance which can endure for ages without change of appearance, or loss of strength. How much, then, does posterity owe to the plastic art!

Having mentioned the Florence museum, I cannot resist telling you an anecdote, which, however absurd, will be for ever associated in our recollections with its Etruscan treasures. A young friend of ours, in the spirit of kindness, conducted thither an elderly Scotch lady whom he found in Florence in need of a cicerone. After she had admired the pictures in the Tribune, and looked askance, and somewhat shy, at the statues, they passed on to the Etruscan museum, where, after a hasty glance, she requested

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her young squire of dames not to trouble himself farther, for she cared *naething aboot* the *moogs* and the *joogs*, declaring there were prettier ones in every *chayney-cupboard* in Scotland, and beautiful *quaighs* to boot. Yet is this daughter of Scotia, like most of her fair compatriots, a reader, and a thinker—nay, a protector of humble poets, and a sensible agreeable woman.

I trust you will forgive the levity of making you laugh in the midst of a description of the Etruscan memorials of the dead. Rather than lie under such a reproach, I had better confess it to be *a ruse*, or piece of policy of mine to insure against you or my young friends being weary with grave discussions, to which I must now return, though I could make you smile again and again at the senseless indifference our compatriots too often evince in Italy, amongst works of art, which one would expect even a savage to gaze on with interest and admiration.

The league, wisely organised in many of its institutions, prospered. One of the earliest was setting up Termini as land marks for the protection of property. Prayers, sacrifices, libations, and offerings attending the ceremony, to render it imposing, for the auruspices declared the earth belonged to the gods, and that Jove had appro-

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priated Etruria to himself, invoking the vengeance of heaven on whoever removed his neighbour's landmark. Varro says, divine honours were paid to Terminus.

The fine climate and fruitful soil of central Etruria was then, as now, its guarantee of prosperity. The government was ultra-aristocratic, and the feudal system prevailed, like that of the Normans in England. The nobles and magnates kept all power in their own hands. They formed a sacerdotal and warlike class, to whom the auguries and sacred sciences were revealed. The legislators compiled sacred books, where every public regulation was registered and shown to the people on divine authority. A high priest presided at their national festivals, and a chief magistrate, elected for life from among themselves, assumed the regal dignity, under the title of lucomone. He appeared in public seated in a curule chair of ivory, and adorned with a public tunic, a toga embroidered in gold, and a crown or chaplet of golden oak leaves, with jewelled acorns. He held in his hand an ivory sceptre, and wore the bulla of wrought gold, containing perfumes, which was at once an amulet and a badge of nobility. It was afterwards adopted as the distinction of the Roman youth, and the

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insignia of the equestrian order.* On occasions of triumph, the crown was held over the lucomone's head by a slave. The tunic was embroidered with palm leaves, the toga in stars. This rich costume is of historical interest, as proving how the arts flourished, and also the general influence of religion, for the palm and the eagle were symbols of faith. Every external means was resorted to by the lucomones to add dignity to their appearance, and render themselves imposing, even to wearing extra soles to their sandals, or shoes, to improve their stature. The influence of dress was fully understood by the Etruscans, yet a noble bearing is often deficient in their statuary. Grace and freedom are more conspicuous in their paintings and bassi relievi, than in any single statue we have yet seen. The regal attire and ornaments of the lucomones were the same as the habiliments and insignia with which they decked the statue of Jove in their temples, thus associating their prince with omnipotence. We know from Pliny that the trappings of Jupiter in the capitol were regularly borrowed and worn by the conqueror in the Roman triumph, and more-

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Ingherami—Storia della Toscana.

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over that he stained his face and parts of his body with vermilion, to emulate the appearance of that statue. The portraits of the defunct, found in the Etruscan tombs, reclining on their sarcophagi, are often painted red, which Gori judges to be a species of apotheosis. The Romans adopted the custom from the Etruscans, amongst whom the nobles, being of a sacerdotal class, were considered more approximated to the gods. It shames us to observe, that however their religion became distorted by error, its influence was paramount and apparent, nor could it be said that they lived without God in the world. The division of the people, adopted by Tarchon, was in imitation of the twelve tribes, and the cities of northern and southern Etruria were divided by the same numeral. We may suppose that at that early period the knowledge of the true God, and his institutions, were not yet totally lost in idolatry, though "the law in their hearts" so little prevailed afterwards. Livy says, deputies from the twelve cities assembled annually to decide the more important affairs of the confederation. They met in the Sacrarium of the Temple of Volumnia, in the precincts of a gloomy forest near the present Viterbo. Pliny agrees that each state was free to accept or reject proposi-

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tions for war or peace, or even to live as a republic, or submit to a king, as they judged best. The slender ties which thus bound the Etruscan cities together may account for their annals, as far as they are known, being unsullied by civil war, but their feudal system, combined with their hierocracy, and the weak bonds which bound them to each other, were highly prejudicial to their political strength when assailed by the ungrateful Romans. It was a mere vain show, the lictors carrying a bundle of rods before each lucomone to the field. The fasces were no appropriate symbols of the Etruscan people. Though the magnates held together, the lower orders had no stake in the land, or general interest to excite them to fight, or die, for their country's weal. They were serfs, and bondage is the same whoever governs, yet have we reason to suppose the Etruscan legislature was not tyrannical, because the country flourished.

Kings and free dynasties are occasionally alluded to by ancient authors, but I can find no trace of an hereditary monarchy. Mezentius is called King of the Tyrrhenians, and to his well-known cruelty Ingherami attributes the hatred the Etruscans evinced against sovereigns. Porsenna in later times was denominated King of

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Etruria, and did honour to the name. Horace gives both Propertius and Mecænas a direct descent from Etruscan royalty. The thirty-ninth king, in Dempster's succession, is styled Propertius, and we are going to his seat of government, Volterra, which he defended nobly. Amongst the ancestors of the Roman prefect I find Celnio, who reigned at Arezzo, and after him comes King Mecænas, who was the fiftieth and last, just four hundred years before his illustrious descendant decided the fate of the world, by persuading Augustus not to surrender its empire.

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LETTER XXI.

Villa Brodriek.

I MUST now remind you of the arrival of Demaratus, a rich merchant from Corinth, at Tarquinia, which is mentioned in Roman history, because his son Lucumo, the inheritor of his great wealth, after marrying Tanaquil, a lady of high lineage, and supposed to be descended from Tarchon, removed to the city of the seven hills, was favourably received by Ancus Martius, and won golden opinions by his splendour and liberality. You will remember the tale of an eagle flying over him, as he approached the gate of Rome, stooping, snatching off his cap, and veering round and round his chariot. And you will recollect Tanaquil's prediction from the omen, that the gods intended him to wear a crown, which fired his

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showing that the right of reigning appertained to the eldest daughter, who was always united in marriage to a person chosen by the king to succeed him, with the express approbation of the senate; and that the son of this union could only reign in right of his mother, and in case she had no daughter. The whole history, says Orioli, proves that this was really the law in force, from the foundation of the city until the establishment of the republic. Thus—

Numa, married the daughter of Taticis.

Tullius was united to Herselia, the daughter of Romulus.

Ancus Martius, was himself the son of Pompilia, and Numa's grandson.

Tarquinius Priscus accordingly married Tanaquil, the daughter of Ancus.

Servius Tullius, an Etruscan, was the selected husband of their daughter, Tarquinia. (His name had been Masteoni.)

And Tarquin the Proud secured his own succession by uniting himself to both the daughters of Tullius, one after the other.

This hypothesis, and our friend's reasons for holding it, are now publishing under the title of "Dei sette re di Roma," with additional proofs of its truth. Orioli shows that the same law ex-

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isted when Æneas landed in Italy. We know the Trojan married Lavinia, and that he reigned in right of his wife, after the death of her father Latinus, who also inherited from his mother, the daughter of Faunus, King of Alba, she having been first married to Hercules, during his transit from Spain through Italy: but this hero, bent on the enterprises which were ultimately to render him worthy of Olympus, could not tarry even for a wife, nor can I follow him, or even Orioli, in his retrospective genealogy, through the regions of mythology, and amongst the gods; but I weary you—therefore, leaving Hercules to pursue his labours, we must return to Tarquinia, where Orioli has discovered the anti-salic law to have been also in force, and where he accounts for the elevation of Demaratus to the throne, by supposing he espoused the daughter of the king whom he succeeded. The difficulties and contentions which opposed his son's reigning after him, he attributes to there being no royal daughter to entitle him to the crown. You will naturally say, how has so influential a law been lost sight of, after having ruled the political destinies of Italy for ages? Livy, whom Orioli calls the Walter Scott of antiquity, mentions Tanaquil as being of the most exalted rank: he might have made her

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lineage clear, but Livy was no chronicle of facts: he dressed the fables, and the crude traditions of early ages, in elegant prose, and had the art of weaving them together in a manner, that at once flattered and amused the Roman people, but he never troubled himself with exploring the truths of history. Plutarch, also, was more a philosophical moralist and biographer than an historian.

The fact, that amongst so many great authors, none were explicit on a point so important, only proves how inefficient are the historians extant, and bears out Niebuhr in asserting, that the annals of ancient Rome are but a tissue of amusing fables; however, the German historian has gone too far, to please our sex, at least. To me, it is vexatious and humiliating, to see the long cherished romance of a country's origin and progress in civilization, torn down like that fine ivy, which, parasite though it be, embraces and sustains the old walls it embellishes. I would as soon strip Tintern, Kenilworth, and all our gothic monuments, of their verdant mantels, as destroy the romantic associations which the histories of Greece and Rome have impressed on the recollections of childhood. In sacred things, and from Christian nations, let us have *truth*, pure as its source, but, that light lost, whatever embellishes with heroic

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achivements the dark annals of the heathen, propitiates our charitable feelings towards them. There is always enough to remind us that they knew not God, and too little to console us with the hope, "that they who had not the law, were a law unto themselves." Orioli's discoveries, on the contrary, add a deeper and more romantic interest to that early age. Possibly, I am somewhat stimulated by vanity to record the opinions of one, who, standing like an oracle to expound the past, declares and proves that Italy, when she first sat a queen amongst nations, gloried in being governed by women.* But of Etruscan authors there are none extant, and I will remember Professor Rosellini, who accompanied Champolion to

* Signor Orioli was a distinguished professor at Bologna, in 1831, and the pride of the University. He was, I believe, in no respect concerned in the attempt at revolution; but the movement made, he consented with others, as guiltless as himself, to form the provisional government, hoping to restrain the impetuous, and prevent bloodshed. When the Austrian troops arrived, arrest followed, and final exile. He went to Paris, and, I believe, to London; at last, the fame of the living encyclopedia spread in England, and Professor Orioli was requested to accept a chair in the University of Corfu. He is now its rector, but he sighs for his native land, and is, alas! excluded! By the liberality of the Grand Duke of Tuscany, he has been welcomed at the Congresses of Pisa and Florence, and invited to settle in either city, but the English know his worth, and will not willingly lose him. I shall have occasion to speak of him hereafter.

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Egypt, observing to us, "that national annals are rarely found, where a sacerdotal caste has predominated;" instancing the Egyptians, Hindoos, and Etruscans, "though their monuments," he added, "attest the existence of former power, wealth, and greatness."

However, there are lapidary inscriptions in abundance amongst the remains of Etruria; and the time is come, when those who have pretended to decypher them by the aid of Greek or Latin scholarship, must hide their diminished heads.

Fifty years ago, the genius of Etruria slept with her lucomones in the tombs. They have now walked forth like the Pharaoh's of Egypt, to fill us with wonder and admiration. They were both alike dumb, when they first broke the cerements of their gorgeous sepulchres; but the time is come, and the wisdom of the All-wise has permitted that they should raise their voices, and speak of the mighty past. The hieroglyphics are believed to be decyphered, the equally mysterious characters of Etruria, hitherto vainly attempted, are now on the eve of being revealed, by the marvellous perseverance and erudition of Sir William Betham, a gentleman of Suffolk, and the distinguished archeologist and scholar, who has for several years filled, with so much honour, the

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appointment of Ulster King of Arms at the Irish Court. Established in the Bermingham Tower of Dublin Castle, that stern remnant of other days, where the archives of Ireland are appropriately collected, this devoted antiquary has explored the remains of Celtic literature, and acquired a knowledge of the language which the learned of other countries could neither command the opportunity, or possess the stimulating interest to achieve.

It was amongst the Christian records of a land, once denominated the Isle of Saints, we left Sir William Betham deeply engaged, when we visited Ireland in 1827. His researches amongst the ancient manuscripts soon produced a volume of important matter, which we found a few months after, during a commemoration at Oxford, in the hands of the learned there, and calling forth abundant attention and applause. His researches have since been attracted to the more remote Pagan times, but always with the ultimate object of tracing back, through the labyrinth of fable and error, to the source of divine truth, and to that land where the Lord reigned, and where his enemies were scattered. When we were last at Chiusi and in Rome, the Etruscan language was a dark enigma. I remember asking a learned

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friend, with woman's pertinacity, if there were not *one* word to be deciphered of all the inscriptions before us? "Yes," he answered, "there is one, and but one. We know that *Easar* signifies God." I have since learnt, from that accomplished artist and scholar, Signor Liverati, that the tradition which has brought this one word down to our times, is a circumstance mentioned by Suetonius, who says, that a bronze inscription in Rome, relating to Ceasar Augustus, having been struct by lighting, the first letter C became defaced; and the aruspices, who were all Etruscans, recognizing a word of their own language, in the mutilated remains of *Ceasar*, at once predicted that the emperor would soon be enrolled amongst the *gods—Easar* having been substituted for his earthly title.

It is remarkable, that Ingherami, in alluding to this incident, quotes authorities to prove, that the Etruscan language differed little from those of some northern nations. He cites examples from the Swedish and from the Irish, signifying that the same word implies Divinity in general. He also says, distinctly, that *aesar* seems to be used in Ireland, even in our days, as the plural of *as* or God. How many have thus had glimmerings of the truth, like Toselli of Bologna, who has pub-

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lished a dictionary in three volumes, containing about three thousand primitive Italian words of Celtic origin, consequently he says, Gaelic-Italian! Yet none have gone far enough to solve the riddle, which might have ever remained one, had not Sir William Betham proved an Œdipus. I cannot better do justice to his achievment than by giving you a passage from his letter, addressed to Mr. Hudson Gurney, which I happen to have by me. It was written on seeing the Etruscan tombs exhibited in Pall-Mall, in 1837; after eulogizing the exhibition, and setting forth its utility, he continues—

"The chief object I have now in addressing you, is to point out the value and importance of the inscriptions in these tombs and chambers. Lanzi and others have in vain endeavoured to translate and explain them, by the Greek and Latin languages, and like the attempt of Gesenius and Bochart, to explain the Phœnician inscriptions by the Hebrew, he has left the subject as obscure as before he touched upon it, and demonstrated, that without a knowledge of the language in which they were written, it is a hopeless task to attempt to explain them. You are aware that I have, in two papers lately read before the Royal Irish Academy, as well as in

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the volume lately published, under the title of the 'Gael and Cymbri,' endeavoured to prove the identity of the ancient Celtic with the Phœnician, Etrurian and Pelasgic languages; I found all the names, which have come down to us, through the Greek and Latin authors, and particulary the geographic names of Ptolemy, to be significant, and I may say, identical with the Celtic. The inscriptions on these tombs supplied us with a test, as far as the Etruscan is concerned, which would enable me either to put an end to a delusion or establish the accuracy of my hypothesis—if these inscriptions be significant and intelligible in the Celtic, it goes far towards demonstration.

"I have now no small gratification in stating to you and the Society of Antiquaries, that they bear me out fully. They are significant, and appropriately so in every instance. The discovery of a key to the Etruscan tongue, will, no doubt, lead to results of much more value than the mere explanation of these inscriptions, valuable and interesting as they certainly are."

Sir William then proceeds to give translations of the inscriptions over the paintings on the walls, which were fac-similies of those in the tomb of Tarquinia, aud every word of his is appropriate to the abode of death, and explanatory of the funeral

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rites and games, and the functions of those who attended and assisted them. Lanzi's attempt at translation, on the contrary, bear not the slightest analogy with the subject. I should send you the whole letter, were not Sir William Betham now, I hope, preparing to give his discoveries to the world, which will, I trust, draw aside the veil that has so long concealed from us the written memorials of Etruria.

I was particularly interested by his discovering the word *bean-uruisg*, over a female who stands in a distracted state, amongst the ceremonial group. It is the precise Highland appellation of that mysterious being, called *bean-shee*, in Ireland, the familiar spirit which is supposed to be the attendant on certain noble families, and to announce by her cries the approach of death or disaster. The word *bean-uruisg* is well remembered by us, as the name of poor Lady Scott's beautiful little black spaniel, which was always at her feet at Abbotsford. I remember asking Sir Walter, whence the favourite derived its appellation, and hearing from him what I have stated. A sigh from the deepest recesses of the heart, inevitably follows every recollection of that matchless man. Yet, like a true master spirit, he still lives for those who knew him well and heard him

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oft, and he is now vividly before me. My inquiry on that occasion touched a chord to which his fancy willingly responded, and after the explanatory prelude, he poured forth a strain, mingled with the wailings of those supernatural beings, and gave me in poetry and prose a succession of Highland stories, which have rendered me a welcome guest at many a winter fire side, since that night.

The paintings of the Etruscan tomb afforded another association with the Green Isle. The name of Aibhlein, or Eveleen, so familiar in Irish minstrelsy, is the appellation written on the wall, over a female attendant of the funeral feast, and in whose expressive language it meant, "lovely, amiable, and tender-hearted."

Our first intimation that Sir William Betham was occupied with Etruscan antiquities, came in a manner as amusing as it was unexpected. It was during our tour in 1838. We had made our way to the little city of Gubbio, in that ridge of Appenines which divides Umbria from Romagna.

Having a letter of introduction to the bishop, we were granted an audience, and found the prelate, his prebends, and canons so occupied with a piece of news, conveyed by a French paper, that they could talk of nothing else: it related to a translation made by a compatriot of ours, of

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their celebrated bronze tables, which so many had studied, and no one had ever satisfactorily explained. The Gubbians seemed highly delighted with the discovery, that their tables related to a voyage made by Etrurian mariners, at a very early period, through the Straits of Gibraltar to the British Isles, and that the language proved to be Celtic!!! I did not fail to inquire who had been the Œdipus, but the newspaper was not in the palace, and the bishop did not remember the name, he could only promise to let me know it in the evening, when a canon was sent to our inn, with a scrap of paper, on which was merely written, *Ser Betam.* I thought I was an Œdipus myself to make out what that meant, and quite as clever as the London letter-carrier, who discovered the direction of a missive from Italy, without other indication than the letters

SROMFRYDV.

In fact, I saw at once that our valued friend, Sir William Betham, was the man, and as soon as we were settled in Rome for the winter, I wrote to congratulate him, and urge him to come to Italy, and explore amongst the treasures of the ancient people. His reply confirmed what we had heard at Gubbio, and gave me some of the details contained in his letter to Mr. Gurney, with

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an amusing account of the opposition he was encountering from those who could not bear to have old impressions removed, though they admitted them to be absurd. "However, these things move me not," he said; "being convinced of the accuracy of my opinions, I shall pursue the even tenor of my way, and give the result of my researches to the public, as soon as official business affords the time to devote to the pursuit which it requires and deserves."*

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* Sir William has since published two volumes, containing the translation of these and many other important Etruscan inscriptions, and discussed Etruscan antiquities at large, under the title of "ETRURIA CELTICA.—Etruscan Literature and antiquities investigated; or the language of that ancient and illustrious people, compared and identified with the Iberno Celtic, and both shown to be Phœnician," in which he has fully justified the expectations excited by the first announcement of this extraordinary discovery.

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LETTER XXII.

Villa Brodrick.
Tuesday.

The great heat has subsided, the first autumnal rains have fallen, and so heavily, that the gay ephemeral, who frequent these baths in summer, have taken alarm and fled. We always leave our villa with regret, and feel as if all domestic comforts must be dispensed with till our return. Once started, the interests of a new country carry us forward, and we rough-it joyously. We start to-morrow on our gipsy rambles; I say gipsy, because we travel with our own horses, never dine in a house when we can spread our provisions under a tree, and maraud wherever we go, amongst antiquities and picturesque scenery, loading our panniers with the first, and filling our sketch-books with the last. This tour promises

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a rich booty, for a great part of the ground is nearly untrodden by English travellers.

On condition you promise not to covet the paintings, marbles, bronzes, medals, autographs, Raphael china, and old lace, which I hope to carry home to the villa museum, you shall have all the time I can steal from sleep to write our adventures, and all the sketches my "best of painters" can achieve, to lay before your young students. We pass by Lucca to-morrow, and proceed towards Volterra.

Ponsacco, Wednesday.

Our road from Lucca this morning, by the Val d'Era, has led us through the richest undulating landscape we have ever traversed in any country. I can only compare it to an overflowing cornucopia, vines, olives, chestnuts, and Indian corn, crowded together in beautiful luxuriance.

After winding through the hills for about six miles, the lake of Bientina broke upon our view, through the trees, and appeared repeatedly, again and again, beneath the eye through every vista along the hill side. It is above sixty miles in circumference, and occupies a great plain, which the peasant, who gave the information, said with a sigh, would sustain a population of sixty thou-

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sand, if capable of cultivation. It is a swamp for many miles on the Tuscan side, and would be a frightful desert but for the fine range of the wooded Pistoja mountains, which, studded with villas, form the background of the widely extended landscape. It was into this swamp that the general of the Florentine republic, Raymond de-Cardona, the Catalonian, led the army under his command in 1825, when sent to oppose Castruccio Castracani. You may remember, that speculating on the bad effects which the air of the marsh could not fail to produce on the health of the substantial Florentine merchants, who endured reluctantly the hardships of a campaign, he considered how gladly they would pay largely for leave of absence; but while he increased his fortune he blasted his fame, for he was defeated with great loss at Alto Pascio, and not only taken prisoner, but paraded as a trophy by the victor, who refused to ransom him. A mountain torrent, during the late rains, had broken up a part of the road, of which several of the worthy peasantry came forward to warn us, explaining kindly and anxiously which side we ought to take to avoid the danger. It proved trifling, however, the waters having subsided. I suffered much more from the rough road after passing the Tuscan custom-

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house, and was obliged to stop for an hour opposite a farm-house to rest and recover the jolts. On inquiring for corn to feed our horses, the contadino said he would sift out what he had mixed with lupines for his own cattle, as the latter grain disagrees with horses. Nothing could exceed the sympathy and kindness several poor people expressed at seeing me extended on the spring couch which our convenient carriage affords. When I told them I was suffering from the effects of a fall from my horse of some years' standing, they lamented aloud that there was still a mile and a half of bad road before us, and it was immediately proposed that our friend of the lupines and his sons should go forwards, pick up the loose stones, and fill the ruts. I am reconciled to losing so much paper about myself, only because I could not otherwise do justice to the genuine benevolence of those kind-hearted peasants. When we proceeded, half-an-hour after, the road was actually made! What can I say more for the Italian peasantry! My husband, who followed to assist and encourage them, said he was amazed at the alacrity and rapidity with which they filled up the holes, and sodded them over. I scarcely suffered any inconvenience.

The sun had just gone down when we reached

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the ferry at Calcinaja, and the Arno flowed in a fine broad stream between high banks, reflecting the golden sunset. A noble villa attracted our attention to the right, it proved to be that of the late Lord Wenlock, now occupied by the family to whom he has bequeathed it. We are now lodged for the night in a little osteria, in the village of Ponsacco. We came on here in preference to stopping amongst carriers and their barroccio, at the market town of Ponte d'Era; these long cars are intersected with three moveable seats, like a German waggon, they take off and on according as the load be live stock or dead. I have counted as many as sixteen precious souls in one of these vehicles, drawn by a single horse. The bottom is of elastic basketwork by way of spring.

For those who travel with their own horses in this country, it is quite necessary to carry a well-furnished basket. Though all the larger Italian towns have tolerable inns, we should often be at a loss for a dinner on the cross roads did we not start with a good provision of chickens, ham, orange marmalade, and what Mr. Pierce Gordon calls the *dead languages*. Our expert servant renews the larder wherever we remain long enough to let the turkey or sirloin become tender.

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He has them roasted at the inn the morning of our departure, without in the least outraging the feelings of mine host, who gladly adds a paul or two to the bill for the fire, and "*incomodo,*" or trouble. Good bread is to be found everywhere. One advantage or disadvantage of these inns, where an English family rarely or never stopped before, is, that we became objects of curiosity to the people of the house. We have had three generations about us this evening, which has spared you a much longer letter. First, all ages poured forth and volunteered to empty the carriage, a trouble we never take, except they desire it, saying, the coach-house has no lock. They then begged permission to examine our various travelling coveniences, particularly my *chaise longue,* which makes a soft bed in an emergency, and yet folds up so small that it goes into an oil-cloth cover, and hangs by a strap on the dash-board. Vollies of questions followed; the first is always if my niece is my daughter, and how many I have besides? then, where we came from? complimenting us on speaking Italian "propria come Italiani, anche meglio," and all these subjects exhausted, the old one's begin to tell their own histories and woes, generally of some sick member of the family, as in this case, for whom I prescribe,

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which immediately establishes a sympathy between us. This would be tiresome to the generality of travellers, but the simple annals of the poor are always interesting to those who, like us, go loitering along, and love to observe the character of the people, and we encourage rather than repel their familiarity. The Italians are so sensitive a people, that a word or look is enough to put the intruders to flight; but the opportunity of being useful to their sick, and of comforting their sorrows, by directing them to the source of all consolation, repays fully the loss of time. I have never had reason to repent, and local information is likewise to be obtained by this kind of harmless gossiping.

One precaution is, however, needful that you may part on equally good terms; your agreement should be made beforehand, particularly in little inns, where they do not know what to charge. The plan we pursue is to establish fair bills for the first day or two, and carry them with us; on showing these we have rarely any difficulty, but I always go and reconnoitre the apartment, and select the beds first ordering the horses not to be taken off till our agreement is made. Having accumulated a number of reasonable bills during our various journeys, I always carry them in a

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portfolio in the pocket of the carriage, and I believe we pay little more for ourselves than the "vetturini," and for our horses always "l'ordinario," which is their tariff. Of course the padrone is well satisfied, for instead of a hot supper we prefer our own tea, which costs him milk and sugar only; but it is necessary to announce on arriving that milk will be required, for, if there be no *cafe** near to supply that commodity, it must be sent for into the country, often at a distance of some miles; and the decanter, or flask, in which it is generally brought, must be economised in a cool place for the morning, if you propose an early start. An old scarlet cloth valise of the Royal Dragoons, which made the campaign of Spain, now carries our travelling sheets; but the poorest Italian house has its store-press of house-linen, white and well aired, though often coarse, and we only resort to our own in cases of necessity, when the inn sheets are very damp or absolute graters. A trabicola, or what is profanely called a *prete*, or monk, with a pan of fire hanging within it, is an excellent expedient

* Coffee-house.

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for warming beds, and should never be despised, but in the dog days.

A recent lady traveller is reported by her *compagnons de voyage* to have resorted to the plan pursued at Eton, and obliged her meek and obedient husband to do duty for a warming pan! requiring the patient fag to vacate his place as soon as she was ready to take it. Here is a modern Griselda for you.

The road to Volterra, this morning, lay, for the first ten miles, through a rich wine country, the vines cultivated on high poles, like our hops, instead of hanging from tree to tree, which, though beautiful to the eye, can never produce good wine, the fruit being too far from the earth.

After passing along the Val d'Arno, and crossing through the broad bed of a river, nearly dry, like many Italian rivers in summer, we ascended to quite a new country—a region which intersects Tuscany for several miles, and looks as if the waters of the flood had here subsided in violent agitation, the hand of man having never touched it since; hills of clay, whitened and cracked in the wind, without a sign of verdure, or blade of grass, save here and there a twig, parched to the colour of the dry mud, of which it was the abor-

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tion.* To me it seemed the road to Dante's "city of woe," and a gathering storm before us, with an occasional flash and rumble of heaven's artillery, added to the effect. Volterra, with its walls and towers, crowned the top of a high hill in front of us; there was an awful sublimity in the whole scene. We hurried on for shelter, and rejoiced to find a new inn, which we entered, expecting torrents of rain, but a high wind rose, and drove the threatening clouds far away; we watched their retreat from the window, while we dined, and then began our five miles' ascent, to the ancient city, with the help of a stout leader to the carriage.

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* Non frondi verdi, ma di color fosco,
Non rami schietti, ma nodosi e 'nvolti,
Non pomi v'eran, ma stecchi con tosco.
Non han sì aspre sterpi, nè sì folti,
Quelle fiere selvagge, che'n odio hanno,
Tra Cecina e Corneto i luoghi colti.
Inferno, Canto, XIII.

"Not verdant there
The foliage, but of dusky hue; not light
The boughs and tapering, but with knares deform'd,
And matted thick: fruits there were none, but thorns
Instead, with venom filled. Less sharp than these,
Less intricate the breaks wherein abide
Those animals, that hate the cultur'd fields
Betwixt Carpeto and Cecina's streams."
Cary's Translation.

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The road zig-zags along the mountain side; the latter part is very fine. Two marble columns stand at the top of the last ascent, bearing the arms of Volterra, and an inscription, complimentary to the Grand Duke, and commemorating the opening of the road, which, from thence, forms a broad terrace under the old walls of the town.

Volterra claims to have existed since the year three hundred, after the flood, and an allusion is supposed to be made to it in Aristotle's Enorea, or "Liber de Mirabilibus." In the years 454 of Rome, the Latin eagles first menaced the liberties of Volterra, led by Scipo, but without success, nor was she brought under the yoke till twenty years after; in compensation, she was made a Roman municipality, which privilege, or shadow of liberty, the Volterranni would have lost for their adherence to Marius, but for the patronage of Cicero. Sylla revenged himself by besieging Volterra for two years, and a tower bearing his name, surmounting a distant hill, is the first object pointed out in the environs.

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LETTER XXIII.

Volterra, Friday.

A good inn, the Three Graces, received us last night—the proprietors, the worthy brothers Callai, exerted themselves to make us comfortable. The commandant of the fortress, Major Banchi, whom we had known before, was so obliging as to come and offer us his services this morning. He is a meritorious officer, and has made improvements in the management of the prisoners here, which do honour to his enlightened humanity. After telling us what was to be seen, he sent a civil message to the Canonico Topi, to say, that an English family of his acquaintance wished to see the museum, the more precious part of which is in the canon's custody. He then proposed taking us into the cathedral, but mass was going

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on, and we would not enter on any account. Much has been said and written about strangers profaning the churches abroad, by lionizing them during the time of service, but I trust many, like ourselves, remember, at the threshold, that they are entering the house of God, and retire, if it be the hour of prayer. Single individuals are at all times to be found at their devotions, but their humble attitude and abstraction command so much respect, that strangers would naturally avoid disturbing them, and speak in a subdued tone.

While awaiting the canon's answer, we went to see the works in alabaster, for which Volterra has always been celebrated. There are now a hundred and fifty master artists employed, and the quarries within thirty miles round yield above forty different kinds of alabaster. The variety and beauty of the various objects for sale pleased as much as their cheapness surprised us. Had we been leaving Italy, I could not have resisted loading the carriage with some of the graceful vases, ewers, baskets of flowers, and groups of figures, to be purchased for a few scudi. We contented ourselves with ordering a small square of each alabaster, with its name, and where found, written on the back.

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In the piazza we met the valet-de-place, returning to say, that Signor Topi could not show the museum to any one who was not particularly recommended to himself by letter. The commandant stared, and complained to the engineer, who was just passing; both gentlemen thought the canonico daft, and talked of applying to the civil authorities; however, the engineer said he would go and talk the old gentleman over, and assure him we were old residents in Italy, and known* to the Grand Duke. We soon after received a message that the canonico was waiting for us, but that we must make haste, else he would go off—we hurried to the museum, but he was already gone. We waited half an hour in the cold vestibule, accommodated with chairs by a poor fruit woman, at the door; we asked her about the canonico; she said he was a worthy man,† but she suspected he was hungry, and had gone home to dine. At last a little old priest, in black canonicals, came fussing past us, inquiring for the custode—the doors were then opened. Instead of receiving, we had to make apologies to conciliate the testy churchman, but he was not to be conciliated. It was in vain we made the most

* Ben vedute.

† Buono come il pane.

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of our antiquarian lore, to show the interest we took in all before us, and that he was not throwing pearls before swine, in exhibiting his gems; he would not be softened—he was, throughout, sharp and ill-tempered; indeed, he frightened Charlotte, by snapping at her, for touching a ring in one of the drawers, which he reluctantly drew out. I took an opportunity of telling him how kind we had found the canons at Chuisi, some years ago; he said they could do as they pleased, the collections being their own. Finding it impossible to draw any useful information from this cross old man, I asked him if there were many antiquaries in Volterra? he understood, and said there were, but they did not like the *seccatura*; in plain English, would not be bored by strangers. I was glad our spirited friend, the commandant, had left us. Young Callai, the valet-de-place, was quite hurt and scandalized. By way of apology, he assured me the old man was mad—had "la luna." Such conduct is, I believe, without parallel in Italy. As soon as the uncourteous canon had locked up his cabinets, and taken himself away, we set about examining the larger objects of the museum in peace.

Amongst the Etruscans, you may remember, some families interred their dead entire, but many

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more burnt them in asbestos sheets, and put their ashes in urns, of an oblong form, one, two, three, or more feet in length, with a figure of the defunct, seated, or reclining on the lid, and groups, in bas-relief, beneath, representing mythological subjects, or funeral processions, with the attendant weepers. Some are of marble or alabaster,* others of tufo, and more of the smaller size are of terra cotta, or baked clay, for the humbler classes.

In this museum, above four hundred of these are ranged in shelves, around the rooms, the larger below, the smaller above. On some were letters, indicating the name of the family to whom they appertained—names familiar to us in Roman history, as Gracchus. In the first room are two noble sarcophagi of great size and beauty, covered with that cream-coloured *pattine*, or coating, which marble acquires by age; these were found in the same tomb, and have several characters traced upon them, from which the antiquaries learn that they belonged to the Flavian family, from which sprung the Emperors Vespasian,

* Monsignore Guarnacci, Bishop of Volterra, prevented the citizens from breaking up the alabaster urns, for building materials, by offering them their weight in silver for any antiquities found, and thus formed a collection, which he bequeathed to the town in 1761.

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VOLTERRA

ETRUSCAN SARCOPHAGUS

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Titus, and Domitian. Skeletons, and a quantity of bones found therein, indicated the remains having been interred entire. The smaller receptacles, containing ashes, are called in Italian, *urna*, which our word urn so ill describes, that "chest" has been adopted, though it is far from conveying to the mind a just idea of sculptured marble, or modelled clay.

I have made a list of the most remarkable bas-reliefs on these oblong cinerary-urns, or chests, to give you an idea how diversified are the subjects. Some are from domestic life, others represent funeral rites, banquets, games, sacrifices, and processions; others present battles, and scenes from history and mythology, which are all supposed to be taken from the facts and fables of ancient Greece, because they are best known. No doubt, if the Etruscan annals were equally familiar, antiquaries would find many home scenes appertaining to the family or ancestry of the defunct, carved on the receptacle of his ashes; and it may be hoped, now the language is likely to be developed, we shall have more correct readings of the Etruscan inscriptions, throwing light on the hitherto dark page of the past.

One of the most striking and spirited bas-reliefs we saw to-day, presents ten warriors attacking a

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gate, with three sculptured heads over the arch, evidently the Porta del Arco, which still exists in Volterra. Four of the assailants have fallen, two are striding over the prostrate bodies of their companions, to the gate, with their shields held above their heads to ward off the missiles those on the walls may be supposed to be casting down upon them. Two archers, in chain armour, behind, seem hurrying away to some other enterprize, while the principal assailant of the gate itself, with helmet and shield, is falling head-long from a broken scaling-ladder, which he still grapples. This animated scene, for want of better illustration, is, I find, called the death of Capaneus, a noble Argive, who had made a rash vow to take Thebes in spite of Jove's protection. The fable reports the offended deity to have struck him dead, with a thunder-bolt, while assailing the gate, and antiquaries suppose the Porta del Arco to be introduced instead of the Theban Elettride, in compliment to Volterra. But why should not some fact in the city's own eventful annals be here sculptured? I see no indication of Jove's intervention, nor any thing beyond the simple fact, that the enemy was resolute, the gate strong, and the ladder too weak to resist some missiles hurled from above. However, if we can reduce so many

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figures to a small compass, you shall have a sketch to judge for yourself.*

In another bas-relief, a gate, with three heads, appears assailed by eleven warriors, one of whom holds a decapitated head, which he seems about to throw into the city. This subject is called by antiquaries, the seven heroes at the gate of Thebes, but evidently with no better reason than the former.

In a third, four heroes, in rich costume, attacked a portal without heads, but there are three living defenders in their places, throwing darts and stones on the assailants, one of whom is hurling a decapitated head as before. At the side of the gate is a square window, where are seen the head and shoulders of an individual, who looks frightened, and appears to be a woman.

I cannot help differing from those who, even in Italy, uphold the preponderance of Greece over Etruria, and throw a doubt upon the Etruscan interpretations found for many beautiful sculptures upon the monuments ; though I must confess that, having no catalogue to-day, our own

* To give an idea of the Etruscan monuments to those who have never seen them, we have placed one of the most interesting of the recumbent figures at Volterra over the sarcophagus, as they are always found in the tombs.

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guesses had no resource in many cases except the fables of Grecian mythology. But it is hard to suppose a great people were so much at a loss for domestic annals, that they could not decorate their tombs with subjects appertaining to their family and country, and their own peculiar religion.

The maritime character of the people of ancient Italy is demonstrated by the prevalence of marine divinities in these bas-reliefs, filling the whole front of the sarcophagus with their extended wings and dolphin tails. One of these holds two young and graceful human beings, of different sexes, in his tortuous extremities, and is evidently separating them with a look of stern determination. Had the deity been a Cyclops, the story of Acis and Galatea would be well told in the sculpture, for the female figure, whose arms are free, is forcibly trying to extricate a huge stone from the grasp of the oppressor, who seems in the act of hurling the "massive ruin" against the devoted head of the youth, while holding him at arm's length.

Another marine divinity of great beauty holds a falchion, and has large eyes in the extended wings, to indicate, I suppose, the vigilance which a sea-faring life requires.

In a third are two winged genii, turning a wheel between their hands. The wheel, indica-

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ting eternity, is in the form of a lotus-flower—one of the many remains which connect ancient Etruria with Egypt.

The second room seems allotted more particularly to the bas-relief, belonging to the fables of Grecian history, such as, the parting of Œdipus and his sons; Ulysses bound to his ship; the Syrens doing their worst to seduce him, are playing, one on a lyre, another on a flute, and a third on a six-reeded Pan's pipe. Several might be supposed to represent the story of Helen. In one of them, a witty friend of ours, observed that Paris seemed monopolized by a bale of merchandize, and more attentive to its safety than to his love. In another, a winged Venus is protecting him from the jealousy of his brothers, whom he had surpassed in the game of the discus. There is a second female figure in the group, holding a palm over his head.

Several bas-reliefs seem to represent the drawing of lots for selecting the doomed victims of the Minotaur, and in the fifth room the whole story of Orestes is told, and also the feats of Meleager. There is also Œsculapius dressing the wounds of Philoctetes in a cavern, to enable him to repair, with the arrows of Hercules, dipped in the gaul of the hydra, to the Trojan war.

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A long alabaster sarcophagus represents a triumph. The conqueror stands in a richly ornamented quadriga, the horses caparisoned; a female genius, with a torch, seems to conduct and light the hero on his way. Six figures, with musical instruments, the lyre, double flute, and horns, precedes the car; a soldier and a boy, with a casket, follow, to represent, perhaps, the army and its spoils.

I observed on another a long biga, covered over like our waggons. Within reclines a middle-aged man, in a toga, whose arm encircles the neck of a dignified female, seated by his side, and on whom his eyes rest with thought intent. She wears a tiara, which indicates her being a matron and the mother of a family. A figure on horseback seems to urge their turning back, while those within the chariot seem to consult anxiously about the prudence of the measure. An old warrior is behind, carrying something on his shoulders, and taking care of two children. One could fancy an interesting romance in the expressive features and actions of this group. The sculpture evidently records some important event of their lives. There is another subject of this kind, a biga, drawn by mules, a single figure reclines within, and a litter is carried before him, with a

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VOLTERRA.

PORTA S. FELICI, OR SARACENI.

LOOKING TOWARDS CECINA

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window, through which a female head is looking. Attendants, on foot and on horseback, proceed and follow. One may suppose the maiden in the litter to be a fair captive, which some Etruscan Scipio is honourably conducting to her family. Her looks render it doubtful if her heart goes with her; or possibly she personifies the departed, borne to the tomb, and lamenting the world she has left. One has more pleasure in observing the bas-reliefs to which the learned have attached no story, than those subjects attributed to Grecian history, because the imagination associates them with the private life of a great and illustrious people. Of this character is the young matron reclining on a triclinium, her ancilla, or hand-maid, presents a book, or mirror; others stand around with various objects belonging to the toilet. A male figure, in a tunic and peplum, enters by a door to the right. Another diademed matron, to the left, perceives him, and starts with alarm, raising her hands before her eyes. Antiquaries attempt no illustration, and only say, the door indicates that the apartments of the men and women were apart.

These bas-reliefs are all sculptured on sarcophagi, or chests, and many of them have reclining statues of the defunct on the lid; yet not one

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seems distinctly to relate to death, or the separation of the soul from the body, except the combats at the gate, and two I have not yet described.

A funeral procession, with weepers, in which the car, containing an urn, is drawn by horses, with their heads forcibly bowed down, in token of grief; possibly, the bar of wood is but a common ox-yoke. The second, the parting of body and soul is expressed by a genius on horseback, bearing away the soul, while another destroys the body.

There are many more I have marked down, in which the feats of gods and heroes appear, but I fear to tire your young readers, except I could send them something which would speak to the eye. In this illustrating age, mere description appears flat and dull. In the last room are some statues; one of a female figure discovered in the amphitheatre, is called the Dea Norcia, the goddess of fortune of the Etruscans. It has an inscription on the right arm, but the statue is graceless and mutilated.

Another is more entire, of a soldier, bearded like a pard; the figure is under size, and wants the dignity and beauty so general in Etruscan basreliefs, and so rare in their statues.

We saw no vases worth mentioning. I had ex-

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pected to find several in black *buchero*, or unbaked clay, which some authors give Volterra credit for; but the ancient manufactory was at Chiusi, and there the finest, in the Florence museum, were found; therefore, on the subject of vases, I shall wait till I take you to Porsenna's capital. Possibly there were some in the cabinets which the surly old Topi did not open. The peep he permitted us into one of them, displayed a crowd of lares and votive offerings in bronze. Amongst the latter were some of those little attenuated figures which, it is supposed, consumptive patients laid on the shrines of their gods, to excite commisseration and propitiate for recovery, or to acknowledge the benefit when attained. There was one bronze amongst the idols—a most fearful thing—which I remember having read about. It is a naked male figure, elongated to twenty-four inches, and six times the length its breadth would authorize. The long skinny arms adhering to the sides, and the expression altogether sinister. Gori* calls it a domestic lares, drawn out beyond the standard of human stature, to give it imposing dignity. Like Æneas and his followers, in Mr. Miles's fine picture, by Claud,

* Gori, Museo Etrusco.

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who, to ensure their being taken for heroes, has painted them as if fifteen feet high, and as tall as trees; spoiling a beautiful picture, as I think. But to return to the long thin lares, Gori has another thought about him, that he represents the identical evil genius of gigantic figure and frightful aspect, which appeared to Brutus in his tent, to warn him of Philippi.* Now this cannot fail to render the bronze interesting to my young friends, ugly as I have described it, and only fit to frighten children. The best things the old man allowed us to see were the Etruscan *asses*, the first money cast in Italy, and weighing a pound. He had fine specimens of the double and single *as*, and of all its divisions into ounces, but our view of them was so cursory that I must defer the subject for the present. Through the rooms we observed some coarser utensils in terra cotta. Amphori, with stands, for keeping wine, and pateræ, those flat plates used in sacrifices, with a few of the long-necked lacrimatories, which some think were used for perfumes and anointing. By-the-bye, Count Pieri gravely assured me, when we last met, that the ancient preficæ, or weepers, actually collected their tears in these vases, and

* Plutarc Di animi tranquillitate.

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were paid for them by the drop. We may infer from scripture, that tears were bottled.

It is remarkable, that the custom of having weepers at a funeral still exists in Ireland, particularly in the southern and western parts of the country. The Hibernian preficæ, or keeners, as they are there called, if not always mercenary, and paid for their tears, are still, too often, "the heartless parasites of present cheer," and are bribed, to bemoan the dead, with whiskey, tobacco, and the bagpipes; nevertheless, the Irish cry is heart-rending, and to me, almost maddening. I once heard its piercing tones under such circumstances, that sincerity could not be doubted. The effect was heightened by the accompaniment of a thunder-storm. It was on the shore of one of the Black Lakes,* and in the midst of a sublime ravine, formed by the wildest mountains of Kilkenny. We were a large party, and sheltering under a great projecting rock from the rain, when our attention was drawn from ourselves, by distant shrill airs, mingling strangely

* Kohl, in his "Ireland," mentions these lakes, and says, "the water has the peculiar property of staining all the ground it flows over, of a deep black colour." It is coloured by the bogs from which it flows.

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with the deep rumble of heaven's artillery. The bewailing soon came nearer ; it is a " corpse," said our mountain guides, and immediately we perceived a train of haggard-looking beings, crossing an Alpine bridge, over a narrow part of the lake, to the spot where we were sheltering. The wild procession, I soon ascertained, consisted of the family and young companions of the deceased, a lovely girl, who had been drowned two days before. Eveleen had been the country's pride ; she looked like one of " Spain's dark glancing daughters." Her humble coffin, of rude deal, uncovered by a pall, was borne by four athletic youths—her brothers and her betrothed, to whom she was soon to have been united. A flash of lightning, which played about their naked feet, and a tremendous peal of thunder at the moment, appalled and arrested, for a brief space, the mourning train, which gave me time to observe them. Her brothers looked sorrow-stricken, but I at once distinguished her lover, by the compressed lip and intense misery of his fine expressive countenance. Closely following the coffin was a tall middle-aged man, who still more betrayed the anguish of his soul in all the eloquent gesture of Irish feeling. At one moment his arms were extended, as if to seize and arrest the

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lifeless remains they were bearing away from him; the next, in the phrenzy of despair, he beat his breast and tore his hair; anon, the heart-striken mourner clasped his hands, and raised them to heaven, with a look which said, "Thy will, O God, be done!" It was her bereaved father, and his lovely child had lost her life in saving him from a watery grave. They had been fishing, and he had fallen into the lake; the rope she threw him from the boat gave way, just as he was near enough to grapple the side; but the anxious daughter had been pulling with all her strength, and thus suddenly loosed, she fell over on the other side, and sank before her distracted parent, himself exhausted, could afford her assistance. My eyes followed the train which bore her through the dark ravine. Their heads were uncovered, their lank raven locks streamed through the troubled air, half veiling their pale expressive features, which, in that part of the country, bear the stamp of the ancient Celtic race. The minor cadence of their voices was heard above the storm in long wailings. The procession reminded me of the funeral train in Burger's Leonora, and its spectral followers—

> "The bier, the coffin disappeared,
> The dirge in distant echoes died!"

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leaving us strongly excited by the suddenness of the apparition in such a spot, and at such a moment. A scene of more striking sublimity, and an incident of wilder, deeper pathos, are rarely presented together in the drama of life. I fancied I heard the distracting cry of the keeners borne on the blast, across the lake, for many days after.

From the museum we went with considerable eagerness to view the ancient Etruscan gate, called the Porta all' Arco, which is supposed to have existed long before the foundation of Rome. As a whole, it may still be said to be perfect, and there is a solemn grandeur in its architecture which renders it the most imposing monument of ancient Etruria. The height is but twenty-six feet by thirteen. The arch is circular, and constructed of nineteen great masses of tufo without cement. The key-stone is formed, and the pillars are surmounted by large blocks of what appears to be black marble; these are carved into colossal heads, of which every feature is now defaced, yet they preserve a *pose* and expression which is quite sublime, and stamps them to have been the work of a master hand—some Etruscan Phidias, or Praxiteles, who exerted all his art to render the heads of the tutelar gods as imposing as possible to the people, whose salutations they

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VOLTERRA.

PORTA DELL' ARCO

EXTERIOR.

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VOLTERRA

PORTA DELL' ARCO.

INTERIOR

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were placed over the gate to receive. Much of the grandeur is lost in the diminished scale of the sketch I enclose. Colonel Stisted braved a burning sun, and my strong expostulations, to ensure a view of this most interesting monument, with a good light upon it. He also accomplished a sketch of the interior, which is a grand specimen of Etruscan work, and frowns in its massive strength, like the walls of Volterra, which are also without cement, and composed of great square and oblong blocks of Tertiary sand-stone, laid in parallel lines—they are full of marine shells.

This evening the commandant conducted us to the fortress, which was so fatiguing an undertaking for me, that I shall give but a poor description of it. There are two great towers, a curtain, and a donjon-keep in the centre. This awful prison is called the Mastio, and is renowned for its gloomy horrors. In its dungeons the famous mathematician, Lorenzini, was shut up for eleven years, by order of Cosimo III. There, in conscious innocence, the philosopher occupied himself with his favourite science; and though deprived of books, and debarred all communication with the learned outside, he composed a geometrical treatise, divided into twelve parts. He was liberated in 1693, when his persecutor, Cosimo,

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was called to his great account. But the people here talk more of a Count Filicini, whose evil deeds rendered him for eighteen years the inhabitant of this terrible prison. He was an overbearing feudal lord, so cruel in disposition, that one of his sports is said to have been burying the capuchins, of a neighbouring state, up to the neck in his garden, and playing bowls at their heads! How barbarous an animal is man, when he feels not his responsibility to his Maker! There is a hole in the centre of this wretched being's dungeon, which, supposing it to be an *oubliette*, he never ventured to approach but on his hands and knees, lest, groping in the dark, he should fall in; the stone floor is worn all round by his evolutions.

To console us for a painful contemplation of the horrors of the prison house, the sun was just setting when we clambered up to the battlements. No pen or pencil could do justice to the wondrous panorama which burst upon us, lighted up by the glorious blaze of an autumnal sun-set! Blue ether, blending in soft gradation with the saffron hues of a summer evening, would not have suited the scene before us, for it was awful and sublime rather than beautiful. Beneath the eye were the steep declivities of Volterra's mountain site, and in the valley was that unnatural diluvian

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region I tried to give you an idea of yesterday ; beyond, were the Salines, with their smoke, and the mountains of the Boiling Lakes rising behind. In another point, the high ground is surmounted by a tower, bearing the once dreaded name of Sylla ; the river Cecini, like a great boa constrictor, stretched its tortuous length along the valley, and reflected the red light ; the great plain of the Maremma is to the west, with the dark blue sea beyond, touching the horizon, and the Appenines, mingling with the clouds, rise north, south, and east, to close the scene ! A red stormy sky, and a dark canopy of clouds, harmonized best with this picture, though it threatened to mar our expectation for the morrow ; but no other would have combined in wild sublimity with the immense extant and proportions of nature. I have said nothing of nine cities and innumerable towns and villages pointed out to us—they were lost in the general effect. Fatigue was forgotten whilst contemplating this wondrous scene ; but its absorbing interest was lost sight of on our descent from the battlements. I know not how we should have returned home over a rough pavement, had we not found our carriage, through the spontaneous attention of our young coachman, who met us without the gate, on that fine terrace road,

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which encircles the walls, and from which we had an imposing view of the exterior of the great fortress and its stern round towers. I regret exceedingly there was no point from which a sketch could be conveniently taken to send you.

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LETTER XXIV.

Three Graces, Volterra,
Monday.

FULL of ardent expectation to see those far-famed Fumacchi, whence the sal-borax, so essential to our English manufacturers, is obtained, we started Saturday morning at eight o'clock for the lagoons, in the mountains, at a distance of fifteen miles.

A mist, such as I have always fancied Ossian's mantle to be made of, enveloped the ancient city, or rather, we were in a thick cloud, which did not disperse till we had descended to the plain. A gleam of sunshine then broke through, and lighted up the extraordinary country around. Numbers of mules laden with salt, from the *Salines,* were ascending to the government stores in the town, and groups of hardy peasantry, the

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dutchy's pride, were hastening to market, the women in round beaver hats, the only peculiarity of their costume, and unpleasing, because unfeminine. One old creature made us laugh; she was astride on her poney, hosed in grey worsted, her legs visible to the knees, her live poultry strung behind; she looked a living *Calot*. Five miles from Volterra we passed by the *Salines*, where the best salt in Italy is produced, intending to see the works on our return. After finding the broad bed of a river nearly dry, we came to the banks of the Cecina, where we were surprised and delighted to find an elegant suspension-bridge of recent erection. Till that moment all within our view had been of that strange diluvian character to which I have twice before alluded as intersecting Tuscany. Dante is said to have visited the Fumacchi, and to have had this region in his mind when describing the Bolge, in the opening of his eighteenth Canto—

"Luogo è in Inferno detto Malebolge,
Tutto di piestra, e di color ferrigno."*

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* There is a place within the depths of hell
Call'd Malebolge, all of rock, dark stain'd,
With hue ferruginous.

Cary's Translation.

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But this beautiful bridge, or rather the river it embraces, seemed to change the face of nature, as by a spell. On the opposite bank all was verdant loveliness, and the hill side thickly planted. Our ascent was through an oak wood, rarely seen in the part of Italy we inhabit; we fancied ourselves in old England once more, and proceeded in buoyant spirits with an active leader harnessed before our horses. The rider foretold rain, and urged vehemently our stopping at Pomarance, a small town halfway from the Cecina to the Lagoons; but foreseeing no danger, I fancied the man had some motive of his own to answer, a sweetheart to see, perhaps, and we resolved not to indulge him; however, he proved no false prophet, a storm too soon gathered over our heads. Thunder rolled, torrents of rain fell, and the country had reassumed its wild, barren aspect; there was no shelter near, and to proceed was our only resource. Our minds were thus prepared for the horrific, when, by a turning of the road, we found ourselves amongst the rising vapours of what appeared to be a dozen volcanoes! and, approaching the nearest, we beheld a small lake, like a great cauldron, boiling so furiously as to produce high waves, the water of the blackest hue, perhaps from the dark clouds over it, and the

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effluvia strong as smelling salts, mixed with sulphur.

The fearful scene, with the roar of rushing waters, awed and confounded us. After standing near the brink as long as we could endure the heat, stench, and dashing of the spray, the director, to whom we had a letter, conducted us to the works, where the boiling element is, by a simple process, converted into sal-borax.

As soon as we were under cover from the rain, this very obliging person patiently explained to us, that these mountains, for thirty miles round, contain, in various places, lagoons or morasses, composed of sulphur and alum, to a considerable depth, which, he said, for centuries, had been the terror of the country people, from the vapours and smell they emitted. The largest of the lagoons he spoke of as a volcano, and called it Mount Cerbole, or Cerberi, telling us the peasantry had believed it, from the earliest pagan times, to be an entrance into the infernal regions, and never approached it without invoking the Madonna and the saints; superstitious dread prevented all attempts at cultivation, and the land was deemed accursed. If their cattle wandered near Mount Cerberi, they foundered in the burning morasses, even human beings lost

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limbs by stepping unawares into treacherous pit-falls, which burnt them instantly to the bone. A celebrated chemist, whose name I have forgotten, was lost while exploring those awful lagoons for scientific purposes. At length, Musagni, the anatomist, discovered that they contained borax, but the salt is only formed when water is introduced, which suggested the experiment of excavating and forming them into shallow pools, or basins, by conducting the mountain streams into each. The result was fully successful ; the combustible matter beneath keeps the liquid in a continued state of ebullition, by which it absorbs one per cent. of borax acid in twenty-four hours. Since our return, I learn what, on account of the heavy rain, we could not see on the spot, that the proprietor has availed himself of the position of the lagoons, letting the waters of the higher ones, in the mountain recesses, flow into those of the next in elevation, after twenty-four hours ebullition, and so on, descending through seven or eight pools, to those immediately around the works, by which process the acid gains considerable strength before it is conveyed into the evaporating pans.

These are shallow leaden cisterns, nine or ten feet square, placed one lower than the other down the centre of a great room, like a flight of steps.

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Under these hot vapour is conveyed by several flues from an opening in the combustible ground without. The expense of fuel for evaporating and drying was greater than the produce of borax, until Count Lardarelle happily thought of employing the natural volcanic heat which the earth supplies so abundantly.

The impregnated liquid, thus kept at the boiling point, after remaining a few hours in each, is drawn off by syphons through twelve or fifteen of these cisterns in succession, till passing by a pipe through the wall, it settles in the crystalizing vessels without; there the salt forms, which is then carried to the lofts above, where it becomes in a short time perfectly dry, without other heat than that communicated to the floor by the cisterns beneath. After which economical process, the proprietor has no further expense than having the sal-borax packed in barrels for exportation. The boiling lakes or pools amount to three hundred! The purchase of the mountains where he formed them, the capital expended in ware-houses, wages to the work-men, all included, this valuable commodity, so indispensible in England, costs him, I am assured, only six pauls per hundred weight, little more than half a crown, and sells for 105 pauls, or £2 7s., at the present rate of

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exchange. This fortunate French speculatist has disposed of a third share of the concern for £120,000 ; he has a fine place near Pomarance, where, had he been at home, we were told, he would have entertained us hospitably and handsomely ; he has a palace of his own erecting at Leghorn, which fame reports to be worthy of having started into existence under the spell of Alladen's wonderful lamp. The director lastly conducted us to the counting-house, to write our names in a great album, where every one was expected to say something, and many had eloquently expressed their wonder and admiration in various languages, all giving Dame Nature credit for the phenomena, and Count Lardarelle enthusiastic praise for turning them to his own account, but not one attributed any part to God, as the glorious Author of the world, and all its hidden treasures. A few years ago the sal-borax consumed in England was imported from India. Tuscany now supplies the greater part of what is required in our manufactories.

It was three o'clock before we could commence our retrograde journey. The rain was still falling in torrents. Our postillion again urged resting at Pomarance : the town looked comfortless, and the spouts from the houses so drenched the

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poor fellow, as we passed along the narrow street, that he commenced hallowing, and after driving the carriage under the last gate, leaped from his horse, and declared he could go no farther. More convinced than ever that there was a dama or sweetheart in the case, I tried a little gentle expostulation, assuring him of the necessity of our return to Volterra, when he stated as an objection, that the river we had passed in the morning would not be fordable!" "Coragio," I answered, promising to guarantee his safety; on which, seeing us anxious to proceed, he said he would refresh his horse, and be at the bottom of the hill before us. Not fearing for our light compact carriage, we ventured to descend by the old road, for it was shorter considerably, but sadly rugged. I was obliged to be extended full-length on the spring couch, all day, to enable me to endure what we have passed. How much invalids owe to modern invention!

The vetturino again proved a prophet! We found the shallow stream of the morning swollen to a broad and rapid flood; some peasants were on the opposite banks, with their donkeys, fearing and doubting what they should do. From what we had observed in going, we could not imagine the river to be much deeper than our axle-trees, but

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seeing the natives hesitate, made us hesitate also. Yet, what was to be done? "Will you try first alone?" I said to the postillion. "Ho paura Signora, I am afraid," he replied; yet he seemed impatient for our decision, telling me that those who stood on the opposite bank declared the flood was increasing. A moment's reflection reminded me we could not stay where we were, and to ascend the mountain again, in terrible rain, and pass the night without any of our comforts, would be a bad alternative; besides, it was Saturday evening, and we were looking forward with pleasure to our Sabbath rest at Volterra. I then looked up for a moment, and said, let us commend ourselves to Divine protection, and go forward. "Avanti," roared the vetturino, fearless to go with us, with half the carriage to draw, though he would not venture a few steps alone to try the stream; and forward we went. "Keep to the left," cried Colonel Stisted, whose military eye had observed the ground in the morning, and our good horses went on stoutly to the middle of the current, but there its rapidity frightened them, and they turned half round; the carriage heaved as if it would go over; our young coachman quite lost his head, cried and roared, unbuttoning the apron, as if he would jump into the torrent.

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"Avanti, avanti, Agostino," cried my husband, whose presence of mind never fails. It was a fearful moment: I saw all our danger. "Coragio," shouted the vetturino, spurring and pulling with all his might. Our horses righted, and we were in another moment safe on the opposite bank; but our poor Geppino had nearly fainted, and for several minutes he was in a very painful state, his lips quivered, and a chill of horror seemed to be over him; happily there was some wine in the carriage, which, with our woollen shawls, soon warmed him within and without. Poor fellow, I am convinced it was no cowardly apprehension for his own safety which appalled him, but alarm for us, and for his charge, the horses; seeing them turning with the stream, he thought the torrent was carrying us away. He has been with us from a boy, and is zealous and attached—the carriage and horses to him seemed more than life. The moment we had brought him round, the postillion received our fullest applause and thanks, which so elated him, that he was an amusing companion all the way home, and, indeed, did us good service, pulling and relaxing judiciously through all the ups and down of our toilsome journey. The rain still continued to fall in torrents, and increased the darkness, which

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soon enveloped us, without there being any means of lighting our lamps. "Avanti, avanti, coragio," shouted Agostino, assuring us he knew every turn of the steep ascent, and ever and anon he talked to his mare, who, it appeared, rejoiced in the name of "Giudigia." "A hard day thou hast had, poor thing," "ma domani é festa," implying that she should have rest on the Sunday, to compensate for the labour and hardships she was undergoing. We had thought this poor man's voice harsh and disagreeable in the morning, but in the dark it sounded harmonious and cheering; and he seemed aware it would comfort us, for he was seldom silent, though he was on foot for the last two miles, to insure seeing the narrow road better, and was labouring up the terrible hill, as much as his horse. It was after an interval of silence, to recover breath, that he dispelled my fancy, about his having some great attraction at Pomarance, by exclaiming, "Oh! my poor wife at home, what will she think has become of me this sad night! I have two fine children, Signora; you would be in love with them." A great yawn from the vetturino soon after reminded us how late it was. "I wish he would sing," said I; and, immediately, as if he had heard me, or had thought his yawn out of place, he compensated

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[illegible] by [illegible] announcement. The night was intensely dark and cheerless, and the rain such as is known only in the south, and we were in a lonely country, groping our way up a steep mountain: even our horses seemed appalled, and [illegible] at every footstep, but Geppino was himself again, and cheered though he could scarcely see them. Oh! how we longed for the marble pillars: our inquiries after these beacons of safety were often made before the joyous "Eccole!" "here they are," set our fears to rest. To me the last hour had proved an age of anxiety. I could not be still, but, kneeling on my couch, to enable me to see our real situation, I continued to cheer my companions, and recommended ourselves to Him who has said, "Thou shalt not be afraid of the terror by night." At length we began to see lights twinkling through the mist, and Agostino cried out, "One turn more, Signora, and then the Colonne;" this he repeated again and again to beguile us, until the joyous sound of "Eccole davvero," and a glimpse of the white marble columns, standing like seneschals to receive us, turned all our fears to joy and thankfulness, for we were safe on the great level road which leads round the city to the gate!

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LETTER XXV.

Volterra, Monday.

I AROSE with the dawn this morning to dispatch you the history of Saturday's moving accidents and hair-breath 'scapes, by a young traveller, whom our good fortune brought here last night.

You may imagine, after such a day of anxiety and alarm, that our Sabbath was one of thankfulness and congratulation. After reading the morning service in peace, and enjoying our all but inspired Liturgy, whose beautiful simplicity is never more striking and edifying than when contrasted with the artificial pomp and pageantry of Italian worship, we strolled out, and found the principal streets of Volterra strewed with myrtle, indicating there had been a procession. We followed the clue, and it led us to the baptistery, of

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which the great door was festooned with flowers. It had been a temple of Diana, and partly retained the ancient form, but the architecture was concealed by festive decorations, and the pillars were covered with crimson damask.

One altar, where there was an image of the Madonna, with seven swords in her breast, was still surrounded by votaries on their knees ; an official, seated at the door, with a table before him, seemed to be deriving a profitable trade by selling little bottles, which, on inquiry, we were told contained *olio della Madonna*—in fact, oil from the lamp burning perpetually before her shrine—which is supposed to be a cure for every ailment.

Crossing the piazza afterwards, our attention was attracted by the singing of a fine male voice—it came from the prison opposite, once the pretorian palace ; the song was from Tasso, and we recognized a canto of the "*Gerusalemme.*" The full sonorous tones, and the harmonious cadences, proceeded from a small grated window of the lofty tower ; we listened long, and with mingled feelings of sorrow and admiration, for, alas ! we learned from a bystander, that the prisoner, Vanzi, who thus beguiled the day, had been an old offender, and was now awaiting his trial for murder ! The song continued, till another

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gaol-bird commenced carolling from a distant cell, when the first finished his *ottavo*, and we heard him no more. Very different from this thrilling strain, was the stunning roar in which I last heard Tasso sung on the lagoons of Venice. It was one luckless day that I chanced to ask our good gondolier, Beppo, if he could sing the "*Gerusalemme*;" unfortunately, we were too far from the shore to get out and place ourselves at a distance from the singer, nor had he another gondolier to take up the alternative verse, and vary his shrill monotonous *canto fermo*—to me it was almost maddening, and we were obliged to have recourse to a stratagem to stop him without hurting the poor fellow's feelings—it was our last and only experiment, and, in fact, we left Venice with the impression, that strangers had lost little by this kind of minstrelsy, having nearly fallen into disuse. A fine effect is sometimes produced by hearing the responsive song accidentally, particularly that of the women, who also sing Tasso at even-tide, while their husbands are fishing out at sea, swelling their voices, till each can recognize the response of her loved lord from afar, and comfort herself with the assurance of his safety.

I now lament my precipitancy in dispatching our letters this morning, for much information

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has been elicited respecting Volterra by our prolonged stay.

That frowning fortress, I find, was built by the Duke of Athens—the tyrant of Florence; the *mastio* is a worthy momento of his iron reign. Lest you reproach me again with mentioning names familiar in Italian history, without stating the events connected with them, I must bring this personage to your recollection, by reminding you of the period, when, with that inconstancy which belongs to states as well as to individuals, and which even a theocracy was not proof against, the Florentines become discontented with their freedom, and, like the frogs in the fable, desired a king. It was in 1342, that, excited to phrenzy against their magistrates, because of a defeat which they suffered in a battle with the Ghibellines of Lombardy, fought under the walls of Lucca, and by which they lost all hopes of possessing themselves of that city, they entrusted the conduct of the war to twenty citizens, and gave the supreme command to Malatesta of Rimini.

This prince possessing neither courage or prudence, applied to Robert of Naples for aid, who soon despatched Gualtier de Brienne, Duke of Athens, to Florence, who had been the Duke of

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Calabria's lieutenant there, some years before. His valour and his craft were equally known to many, who, willing to let him have power, that he might chastise the malcontents, favoured his taking the reins of government. Gualtier was a descendant of a French crusader, who had assisted at the dismemberment of the Greek empire; his father having lost the dukedom of Athens, and Secci, in the kingdom of Naples, only remained to him. Artful, cunning, and reckless of all moral restraint, thinking only of self-aggrandizement and actual sovereignty, this adventurer penetrated the jealousies which divided every class of the republic, and made them subservient to his purposes. He persecuted the merchants to gratify the nobles, and beheaded the nobles concerned in the recent defeat, to flatter the people, who, to propitiate his favour, painted his arms over their doors, declared him Lord of Florence by acclamation, and routing the gonfalonier from the *Palazzo Vecchio*, established the duke in his place. There the usurper revelled in iniquity, conciliating those only whom he could make tools of extortion, and participators in his licentious life; for he devoted his leisure to corrupting the morals of the women of Florence, and establishing games, fêtes, and tournaments, in order to

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introduce the manners of the dissolute French and Neapolitan courts. He also made his party good with the dependant cities, and became Signor of Volterra, where he ordered the *mastio* to be erected and garrisoned, concluding an ignominious peace with Pisa, the republic's greatest enemy, and sending to France and to Naples for troops of cavalry, as minions of intrigue, rather than for open warfare; he instructed them to corrupt the lower ranks, by drawing them into the wine-houses, and to excite the populace by promising them a perpetual Saturnalia whenever he should become their absolute sovereign; to which elevation he wanted but the name, having assumed the power. But after ten months of excesses, during which he contrived to send large sums of money, wrung from the nobles, to France and Naples, and to oppress all classes, the Florentines came to their senses, three separate conspiracies were formed against him, of which three persons gave him information, whom he rewarded with the torture, and most horrible deaths. The tyrant then summoned three hundred of the principal citizens, under pretence of consulting them on the affairs of the state, and instructed his minions to murder them as they arrived. The members of each conspiracy, finding themselves all included in this treacherous

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invitation, suspected what they had to expect, and mutually agreed to coalesce—to arm the people, and to turn every palace into a fortress. The duke's cavalry patrolled the streets without perceiving the storm which had gathered, till a cry "to arms" resounded, and every roof sent showers of stones upon their heads; the palaces then poured forth their men-at-arms; chains and barricades were in readiness, and cries of "*libertà*" rent the air. The tyrant took refuge in the Palazzo Vecchio, till hunger obliged him to surrender. The people would hear of no terms till his counseller and provost-marshal, Suzzi of Assisi, and his son, were given up to them. He obstinately refused, and evinced a reluctance to let them be sacrificed, which would have done honour to a nobler nature, but his French soldiers, protesting they would not die of famine for three men, drove them out to meet a dreadful fate. Some historians say, that the Bishop of Florence favoured his escape by night, with his troops, to whom he owed his life and a long arrear of pay. Notwithstanding which, the dastard forsook them at Venice, and stole back in a boat to Naples. But Pignotti states, that after eight day's siege, the tyrant formally renounced all power, and was conducted to the frontier, where

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he was forced again to ratify the act, and then permitted to go unmolested.

The Bishop of Florence was an Acciajoli; one of his powerful family was then Grand Seneschal of Naples, hence Gualtier, being sent by King Robert, had claims on his consideration, and obtained his suffrage, nay, eulogium, on his first arrival. But the prelate was so indignant at his abuse of power, that he was himself leader of one of the conspiracies, though he promoted the usurper's being allowed to depart, at least, on easy terms.

There is an admonitory letter extant from the good King of Naples to the Duke of Athens, telling him not to flatter himself, that it was to his own prowess or talents he owed his elevation, but to the dissensions of the republic, which alone left Florence exposed to his usurpation. He strongly urges him to measures of conciliation, and condemns his monopoly of the Palazzo Vecchio. He concludes by predicting his ultimate downfall.

Gualtier demanded aid of the French king for his restoration; that monarch sent ambassadors to treat about it, to little purpose. The republic, having ascertained that the duke still corresponded with Florence, put a price upon his

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head. He finished his career at the battle of Poictiers—a more honourable finale than he deserved.

Could this tyrant have established despotism at Florence, historians assert that liberty would have fled from Italy, and the torpor of the dark ages would again have benighted the south of Europe. Machiavelli describes the Duke of Athens of mean appearance, diminutive and black; and Sismondi says he was one of that degenerate race of Franks of the Levant, called *Pulani*, indicating their insignificance and their vices.

To account for the Florentines so readily electing a stranger to supreme command, I must remind you that it was the policy of the Italian republics never to trust a native with power, probably to avoid jealousies and rivalry. Amongst the worst results Florence had to deplore, was the loss of her dependencies. Arezzo, Volterra, Colle, St. Gemignano, and others, seized the opportunity to cast off their allegiance and assert their own freedom; she had no alternative, observes Machiavelli, but to submit, and to conciliate their friendship, by renouncing all dominion over them, this prudent measure brought them back, by degrees, to her standard.

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We made an attempt to see the house of Daniele di Volterra, whose family is amongst the most distinguished in the town. It is still adorned with his celebrated picture of Elijah, but before we could gain admittance, the evening was so far advanced that we saw nothing to advantage. There are few remarkable pictures in the churches, but many curious relics; amongst others, a substance professing to be a piece of the barley loaves which our Saviour multiplied on the mountain, three thorns of his crown, and there should be a nail of the true cross, which is alluded to in a touching anecdote related by a French traveller, M. de Chateauvieux, in his account of the Maremme, but we could not find it. Approaching Volterra, he describes being driven from a miserable inn, where he had entered to rest, by three shocks of an earthquake; the wild scenery of an extended plain, and the absence of life, bespeaking malaria: it was the season when even the innkeeper had abandoned his *osteria*, with his family, for the heights of St. Gemignano, to escape the consuming fever, leaving but a ghastly incurable to minister to the few travellers who passed that way. M. de Chateauvieux, fearful of again trusting himself beneath a roof, was seated on the trunk of a tree, when a little car came to

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the inn door; two children were laid upon it, and an anxious mother walked by their side; she was still handsome, but pale, fatigued, and apparently overwhelmed with grief. She lifted out her children, and asked for some milk—the house afforded none: she then gave them the only water to be found near, though it was of yellow colour, being impregnated with sulphur, yet she seemed relieved by seeing them swallow a few drops; in fact, the poor children had both been bitten by a mad dog, and their distressed parent was carrying them to Volterra, where she said there was a nail of the true cross—to touch the wounds and dissipate the venom. The traveller betraying incredulity, the poor woman assured him the efficacy of the remedy was known throughout Tuscany from time immemorial, adding, with simplicity, that before applying the holy relic to the part, the priest always heated it red hot! Of course the stranger's scepticism vanished, and his kind sympathy for the little sufferers was comforted with the hope that the actual cautery might prove efficacious; thus it appears the process has been practised in Tuscany long before it was used in modern medicine.*

* Since the above was written, we have heard again and again of there being a nail, to which the same virtues are attributed, amongst

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The sketch I enclose of the old Saraceni Gate, now called Porta Felice, is an attempt of mine. Colonel Stisted would not condescend to look at an arch of the dark ages after contemplating the beautiful Porta all' Arco. Notwithstanding this gate having little beauty to boast of, and being so far unknown to fame, that we cannot ascertain even the origin of its ancient name, yet the view of the country, through the arch, gives a good idea of the plains around Volterra, and of the serpentine Cecina, which you see basking in the evening sun.

It is a problem yet to be solved, if the *Saracens*, who gave a name to this gate, were those discomfited at Garigliano by Pope John X., assisted by the Duke of Spoleto, whose troops afterwards ravaged the coast of Tuscany, and sustained their final overthrow, under the walls of Volterra ; or if the appellation be derived from a noble family

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the relics at Pomerance. I suspect the French author should have said the children were carried there. When last we passed by Monte-Catini, the padrona of the inn, having recently been scratched by her cat, had just returned from a pilgrimage to the nail, and it was to Pomerance she went ; the accident was considered sufficiently alarming to require the aid of a holy relic, and to warrant a journey of a hundred and forty or fifty miles in the heat. A priest lately assured me of its efficacy, but acknowledged the iron consumed in the fire, and required to be occasionally renewed ! ! !

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of that name, made citizens in the twelfth century, and still existing in Tuscany. By-the-bye, that martial pontiff owed his tiara to the love of Theodora, a noble Roman lady, who had influence enough to have him elected to the chair of St. Peter in 904.

I regret much that our disastrous weather on Saturday prevented the possibility of seeing the salt works, for they are the finest in Italy.

On inquiry, I found there are marshes on the banks of the Cecina, in which deep wells being sunk, the water drawn from them is so strongly impregnated with salt, that one hundred pounds, after five or six hours' boiling, will yield twenty-five, and there is one well which produces even thirty per cent. of the best and purest salt. The works are managed by the Tuscan government, who indemnify Volterra for the monopoly; there are above two hundred hands always employed, and twenty million pounds of salt are annually carried up to the store in the town.

We also lost something by despising Pomarance, where, our host Callai assures us, there are some good pictures in the churches, and also an interesting tomb of a youug Greek poet, who had long resided at Volterra to enjoy the society of

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Raffaello Maffei, called *Il Volterrano*, the translator of Homer and Xenophon. It appears the young Byzantine was a scholar and soldier, and found a watery grave crossing the Cecina to Piombino, the sea-port, where he was going to embark for Constantinople. His elegy was writren by Ariosto.

It would be injustice to our worthy host, not to mention a disaster which befel me the evening we returned to the inn, overwhelmed with fatigue, after seeing the Mastio. I threw myself on our *chaise-longue*, resting an arm, somewhat heavily perhaps, on a round table by my side, covered with a piece of damask. I was only made aware of my position by feeling the support giving way, and in a moment I saw, with horror, the floor covered with the fragments of a beautiful inlaid alabaster dejeuné, and the round slab broken into a hundred pieces. I hastened to call the master of the house, showed him the mischief I had done, and deprecated leaving such a valuable work of art insecure; it appeared the valet-de-place had, unawares, drawn the slab out of its groove when moving the table that morning. The padrone expressed no displeasure, and seemed to think more of my mishap than of his own loss, adding, that it had only cost him twenty-four

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crowns, because he never made purchases except when chance offered him a bargain ; that he had certainly refused forty for the table, but that I should only pay for the slab, the pillar he thought might be repaired, and to relieve me, he sent immediately for the artist by whom it was executed. This man, very different in character from his employer, determined to make the most of the opportunity, by asking the full price of a new table for restoring it, which disgusted Callai, who sent him away, telling me I should pay only fifteen scudi, and, could the fragments of the slab be removed from the plaster of Paris ground, the expense would be much less, but the cement being tenacious, the alabaster, as he showed me, generally breaks in the attempt. I was convinced of his good faith and liberality, and paid his demand. I was assured the scudi would scarcely reimburse him, and determined, in some measure, to compensate by recommending all our friends to patronize his house.

He had many beautiful works in alabaster, some purchased on speculation, others to relieve needy tradesmen, and he insisted on making us each a parting present last night. His handsome wife, brother, and nephew, all urging our return, and assuring us our friends should be welcome, *senza*

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interesse. We are just starting for Certaldo, to visit the Marchesa *Senzoni Medici*, where I hope to gather a rich harvest of intellectual interest.

NOTE.—When the travellers went to Florence, two months afterwards, their banker announced having received a wooden case for them, adding, that by its shape, it should contain a new regulation cocked hat for the colonel; on opening the box, they found, with surprise, a fragment of the broken table, beautifully restored, and just suited to stand in a corner. It was accompanied by a letter, full of grateful and respectful expressions.

So much for generous and liberal feeling, in that libelled race—the innkeepers of Italy—whom many an English boy-traveller thinks it gives him consequence to abuse and calumniate.

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LETTER XXVI.

Villa Medici, Certaldo,
Tuesday.

We left Volterra this morning at nine: the postillion, Agostino, and his laborious Giudizia, were again in requisition, to assist us along the hilly road to Certaldo. The sun was bright, the air light and elastic, and our veturino jocund with jests and jollity, confident of favours: the landscape was smiling, though somewhat wild and uncultivated, except in patches. After ascending a long hill, our attention was attracted by a barren spot, covered with stones, which sparkled in the sun; on inquiry, we learnt from our veturino, that it was a quarry of *specchio d' asino*, literally, asses looking-glass, or talc, which the ancients used for glass, and the moderns make into a plaster called scagliola, a composition

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which, prepared and varnished, resembles marble. We were soon out of the carriage, gathering the glittering production, and there were so many beautiful pieces splitting into silver laminæ, which could not possibly be left behind, that a deep sigh escaped our young coachman, as he stowed them under the seats, thinking of his poor horses, and of the long journey before us ; the Volterra alabasters and medals were already heavy at his heart. Agostino took his leave at the top of the highest hill, telling us the rest of the route being chiefly descent, he might only be an impediment, thanking us with many grateful expressions, and hoping we would recommend *Giudizia* "*Povera Bestia*," to any strangers we knew going to Volterra. We then proceeded at a brisk pace, and Colle soon rose before us on a pinnacle, the abundant waters of the river Elba flowing at its base. I lamented greatly being unable to scramble up to the highest point of this most picturesque town, and still more that ever "caught by glare," we had lost so much time on the mere moonshine of the asses looking-glass, which rendered a sketch out of the question ; indeed, Colle deserves more time than we had to bestow, and I shall never cease to regret our not having arranged to pass the night there,

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though our accommodation, apparently, would have been rather primitive. There is an upper and lower town; the suburb, below, is called Spugna, from the nature of the soil. It appears that the waters of the Elba have petrifying properties, and form incrustations over any substance exposed to their influence. To Colle they have been golden streams—producing wealth and celebrity. They rise from several springs about two miles from the town, issuing from the ground with a force and violence that scatters the sand and spray around, and flowing on, in several streams, till collected into a deep canal or mill-race.

This little city once contained more than twenty paper mills, and shared the honour of the invention of paper; for, although it was known to the Arabs, the art of making it had been totally lost since 700, which contributed to plunge the subsequent centuries in denser darkness—many are the disputes about its revival. The translator of Persius claims the credit for his native Fabriano, a little town in the march of Ancona. Padua, the learned, also asserts her right; but Colle seems to have had all the profit in the middle ages, and there are still a dozen mills going, besides manufacturies of hats, of wool,

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and of glass; there was also a flourishing printing office, founded by Lorenzo Lippi, a native of Colle, a celebrated Greek scholar—it was one of the first established in Italy; this novelty naturally attracted men of talent to that place, while it drew forth the native genius of the people. The population is about 5,000.

There is a fine cathedral, but, alas! we could not wait to have the doors opened, and a church of St. Augustine, which I regretted passing by; there are also a few pictures, and a bronze statue of Christ, by Giovanni Bologna.

The tower was constructed by Arnolfo, a celebrated architect, born at Colle, and till within a few years, inhabited by a branch of his family, which still exists. His great work was a bridge of one magnificent arch, across the high banks of the Elba, between the perpendicular cliffs of the town and the opposite suburb; a strong and lofty tower, admirably united the bridge to the rocks, and added grandeur and solidity to the edifice. Some paltry saving, or unpardonable neglect, has allowed this noble work to fall into decay; and one night, about thirty years ago, during a dreadful tempest, the tower and bridge fell with an awful crash, and were swallowed up in the abyss beneath. There

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is a steep descent to the present bridge, which involves ascending again to Spugna, where there was once a celebrated abbey.

Arnolfo di Lapo was the architect of the great cathedral of Florence. He had deep wells dug under its foundation, to guard the building against earthquakes, which, according to the opinion of the period, were occasioned by currents of subterraneous water. Proud of his novel achievement, he apostrophised the structure to this effect, "I have secured thee against earthquakes, may God preserve thee from fire." Arnolfo also built the Palazzo Vecchio, and is the creator of that style of architecture, which is now, I believe, called Florentine.

Professor Ciampi supposes the chequered black and white marble façades and interiors to have been introduced as a memorial of the reconciliation of the Bianchi and Neri factions. They arose in Pistoja from the feuds of two families, and afterwards were joined by the Guelphs and Ghibelines, the Black partizans espousing the cause of the pope, and the White, that of the empire.

Dante, who has shed such a general interest over his country, and of whom I shall have much to tell you, during our pilgrimage, has not left

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Colle without classic association. If you enjoy poring over his philosophic page, turn to the 13th canto of the Purgatorio, where the envious are described, leaning against each other shoulder to shoulder, their eyelids stitched together with wire; there you will meet the Monna Lapia, the inappropriate name of that malicious lady of Sienna, who, being banished to Colle, mounted the tower to pray for the destruction of her compatriots, when engaged in mortal conflict with the Florentines, under the walls,* by whom they were defeated. This event, the unnatural dame acknowledges, occasioned her so much joy, that like the black bird who flew from his master when the winter was over, she audibly renounced Divine protection farther:—

Savia non fui, avvegna che Sapia
Fossi chiamata, e fui degli altrui danni
Pui lieta assai, che di ventura mia.
E perchè tu non credi ch' io t' inganni,
Odi se fui, com' io ti dico, folle.
Gia discendendo l'arco de' mie' anni,
Erano i cittadin miei presso a Colle
In campo guinti co' loro avversari;
Ed io pregava Dio di quel ch' e' volle.
Rotti fur' quivi, e volti negli amari
Passi di fuga e veggendo la caccia;
Letizia presi ad ogni altra dispari;

* In 1254.

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Tanto, ch' i' volsi'n su l' ardita faccia,
Gridando a Dio: omai più, non ti temo;
Come fe' il merlo per poca bonaccia.
Pace volli con Dio in su lo stremo
Della mia vita; e ancor non sarebbe
Lo mio dover per penitenzia scemo,
Se ció non fosse, ch' a memoria m' ebbe
Pier Pettinagno in sue sante orazioni,
A cui di me, per caritade increbbe.

Though Sapia nam'd,
In sapience I excelled not; gladder far
Of other's hurt, than of the good befel one.
That thou may'st own I now deceive thee not,
Hear, if my folly were not as I speak it.
When now my years slop'd waning down the arch,
It so bechanc'd my fellow-citizens,
Near Colle, met their enemies in the field;
And I pray'd God to grant what he had will'd.
There were they vanquish'd, and betook themselves
Unto the bitter passages of flights.
I mark'd the hunt; and waxing out of bounds
In gladness, lifted up my shameless brow,
And, like the Merlin, cheated by a gleam,
Cried, "It is over—Heav'n! I fear thee not."
Upon my verge of life I wish'd for peace
With God; nor yet repentance had supplied
What I did lack of duty, were it not
The Hermit Peter, touch'd with charity,
In his devout orisons thought on me.

Cary's Translation.

It is a passage highly characteristic of the poet, and seizing, as he always does, the popular legends and expressions of the period.

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The petrifying powers of the Elba are also alluded to by that Homer of the middle ages, who never neglected the natural sciences.

I was hoping to meet an humble, but remarkable person, the Procaccio of Colle, of whom I had read an interesting account in the "Guida de' Educatore." The poor man has been blind from childhood, nevertheless, he performs the duties of carrier, between his native town and Pontedera, nearly every day, charged with letters, parcels, and commissions; the addresses are read to him when they are consigned; he feels them all over, ties them up together, and never fails delivering each to the right person. He is always cheerful, healthful, and robust; rain, hail, or snow, he never wears a cloak, or even a hat; and although his lack-lustre eyes yield no expression, his countenance is said to be full of vigour and intelligence.

The admirable editor, the Abbate Sambruschini, who is working so ably to implant high principles in that faithful soil, the youthful Italian mind, has subjoined to his description of this remarkable individual, a detail of his heroic conduct to an unfortunate young scapegrace, brought to Colle by some mountebanks, and who had attempted to rob him of money, which he was en-

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trusted to carry. In defending himself manfully with his stick, he struck the boy to the ground, and finding he had wounded him, ran for a surgeon, who had him conveyed to the hospital; the wretched fellow lost an eye by the blow, which so much grieved the poor blind man, who knew well how to appreciate the deprivation, that he pleaded for him in his examination before the magistrate, urging the possibility of its having been a mere boyish prank, which saving him from a criminal prosecution, he was dismissed by the authorities merely with an order to leave the town next morning. Returning to the dark hovel he had before inhabited, near the dwelling of the blind Procàccio, that worthy man, hearing his groans, was induced to creep up stairs, where, without discovering himself, he tried to comfort the half-blinded boy, who was then humble and contrite, confessing his crime, and that it was not the first he had committed; also acknowledging having run away from his family, on which his hearer strongly persuaded him to return home, urging the parable of the prodigal son; and when the good soul understood that the boy's parents were very far away, and that he had neither courage nor means to undertake the journey, the worthy man hurried home

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to his lodgings, and took from his hiding-place a small sum he had laid by for old age, and entreating a friend to lend him something more, he made up twelve scudi, and carried them to the boy, whose astonishment and gratitude, though still he did not recognise his benefactor, stopped his utterance; three years after a packet was received by the Vicar of Colle, containing twelve scudi, and a letter, stating that the delinquent who had assaulted the blind man, had seen the error of his ways, that he was now employed in a good trade, and requesting that the sum (his first earnings), might be repaid to his generous benefactor, if the person could be found; if not, he wished it to be given to the blind carrier, who was deeply moved when the vicar sent for him, but never confessed being the donor. After various inquiries, however, the coincidence of his having borrowed money just at the time, betrayed him, and he could no longer conceal his benevolence.

It was a sacrifice to hurry away from Colle this morning, but we had promised the Marchesa Lenzoni Medici, to visit her at Certaldo, the first time we passed this way, and it would have been indecorous to surprise a friend's house at a late hour; she invited us expressly to see Boc-

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cacio's mansion, which she had munificently restored at her own expense.

The sun had not set, when we caught a glimpse of the old walls of the town, crowning the summit of a verdant hill; at its base, passes the high road, now lined with houses, and called New Certaldo. The back windows of the Medici Villa overlook the village—the façade looks to the gardens, and across an extensive plain to the mountains.

We had seen it before, when returning some years ago from Rome, but the lady of the manor was not at home, nor did we then know her. We called to leave our acknowledgments for her great kindness in having lent us, the year before, (through a friend, the President Buonarrotti,) another villa near Pistoja, when we had suffered severely in health from the cold and exciting air of Florence, and a few weeks change of air had been recommended. Her handsome sons were then here, and received us; the eldest, Signore Ottaviano, is *attaché* to the Tuscan minister at Vienna, and one of the finest youths we have seen, looking like a knight of chivalry.

We were not quite sure if Madame Lenzoni had returned from Naples, but the first villagers we met, answered our inquiries with evident plea-

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sure, "that the Marchesa had arrived safe the evening before." This amiable lady is of the last branch of the house of Medici, and her palazzo, at Florence, is the rendezvous of all the talent of Italy. She receives every week the literary society of the Tuscan capital, and any distinguished foreigners who seek to be presented to her. These soirées are without constraint, easy and agreeable—no effort to amuse—conversation flows naturally, because none but intellectual persons resort to them.

The Italian literati are in a peculiar degree calculated to make society agreeable, because they are generally modest, and devoid of pretension—never pushing themselves forward, nor riding their hobbies over the company, as I have sometimes seen our own lions monopolize the whole arena to themselves. I greatly lament the air of Florence being so baneful to us, that I never but once enjoyed an academic evening at Casa Lenzoni. Amongst the company there, I particularly remember a cultivated daughter of Prince Corsini, and Madame Rossellini, the author of some very clever little comedies for children. This lady is one of the patronesses of the infant schools at Florence, and deeply impressed with the importance of education in Italy. She is

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daughter to the celebrated improvisatrice, La Fantastice, and a most pleasing agreeable person.

It is to the estimable President Buonarrotti, we are indebted for our introduction to the Marchesa Lenzoni Medici, and for the kindness with which she has honoured us. Of him and his palace, which he inherits from his great ancestor, Michael Angelo, I shall have much to tell you hereafter, for we have been his cherished guests for many happy days.

We also had the great pleasure of meeting at Casa Lenzoni the Cavalier Minordi, the finest draftsman of Italy, whose society and studies in the Palazzo Colonna, we have often enjoyed since in Rome.

Madame Lenzoni's anti-room is decorated with a beautiful statue of Fenorani, which the poet Giordani happily describes—

* "La prima affezióne d'un cuore innocente
Ossia una Psiche."

The Lady of Certaldo gave us the kindest of welcomes. We found her alone, and full of the gracious reception she had received at Naples,

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* The earliest affection of an innocent heart,
Or a Psyche.

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and of the persons of talent she had there been living amongst, particularly a young lady poet, now a popular author.

The Italian nobles, when they repair in spring and autumn to their villas, live with the utmost simplicity; the elegancies of life are left with their penates in town, where the winters and summers are always passed; indeed, the whole year, except a few weeks or days of the vernal and autumnal months, when the interests of their estates seems to be the principal object which draws them to the country. I at first used to exclaim at the bad taste of living in town in the summer, forgetting a precept which that experienced traveller, our old friend Baron Denon, often repeated to me—"To be persuaded that the natives of every country know best what suits their climate and constitution, and as much as possible to adopt their habit and manner of life."

The fact is, the Italian villas standing apart, never sheltered by trees, which are deemed unhealthy near a house, are excessively hot; whereas, in the great palaces and narrow streets of their cities, the sun hardly penetrates, nor even the heated air, for the blinds and sashes are closed from nine in the morning, and never opened till sun sets, the hour of their airing, when they find

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freshness to renovate, and society to cheer them, at the public drives, after being shut up all day; therefore, though I cannot imitate, I have ceased to wonder at their indifference to the country.

This villa is on the general plan, and a most convenient one, of a large saloon in the middle, with rooms opening on it, all round; every thing is plain, clean, and airy, which seems to be all the Italians require in their *villeggiatura*. Our kind hostess has expressed again and again the pleasure she feels in receiving us, because we came without ceremony, and do not require to be entertained. The only difference she made for us was, ordering a tray, with cups and saucers, and that rarity, a tea-pot, to be brought, that we might make our *own* tea, and *be at home*. We had the pleasure of sharing our beverage with the rector and prior of the parish, also the physician, who came to greet the lady of the manor on her return, and to hear of her sejour at Naples. Though very tired, I could not sleep till I had brought you so far on our journey. A stately green silk damask bed, like a pavilion, a relic of the olden times, now invites me to repose and dream of Boccaccio; therefore, I must say, good night, and close a long letter.

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LETTER XXVII.

Boccaccio's House, Certaldo,
Wednesday.

I AM now addressing you from the residence of Boccaccio, the identical apartment in which he lived and where he died. I came prepared to write where he wrote, hoping, for your sake, to imbibe inspiration from the air. It is probably the first letter indited beneath this roof, since that, in which the poet, complaining of declining health, remarked, that it had taken him three days to finish—it was his last.

The ascent to old Certaldo is short, but very steep. Our kind hostess would not hear of my walking—she had a little calesse prepared after breakfast, and made her fattóre, whose whip and horse she could depend upon, drive me up. The town principally consists of one long street, in

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CERTALDO.

BOCACCIOS HOUSE.

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which stands this ancient tenement; by the good taste of Madame Lenzoni, it has been rescued from a charcoal vender, and restored. A gothic window lights a small flight of stairs, which conducts to this long church-like room; it is 25 feet by 12, with an arched roof, 26 feet high. There are two little lancet windows, deep in the thick wall, and Madame Lenzoni has collected from other parts of the house, various objects of interest, probably, many of them coeval, and belonging to the poet, *all* ancient and appropriate. A great sofa, or *settle*, of finely-carved black oak, with cushions of stamped leather, once gilt; arm chairs of the same materials, and an ancient table, to which she has added a book-case, containing all Boccaccio's works, and the best commentaries on them, amounting to five-and-twenty volumes, of various dates and sizes. There was also an old lamp found in the house, in which the hardness of the oil left no doubt of its extreme antiquity, and a most curious hour-glass, capacious enough to last the day; the sand white, and the hours painted in black lines on the crystal; it hangs against the wall, and turns on a pivot. Inserted in the partition, between two arches, are four irregular pieces of marble, which once covered the remains of the poet, and were found in the vault of the

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church, when it was thought necessary to fill it up, several years ago. Boccaccio, having been interred with his predecessors, it was not possible to distinguish his bones from the others. A large print of the plague, as described by the poet, hangs against the wall; and filling the arch at the end of the room, is a munificent tribute from the Marchesa, to the memory of Boccaccio; a fresco, recently painted by Benvenuti, the president at Florence, representing the poet on an open terrace, seated in an ancient chair, a table and desk before him, and composing, with pen in hand. It is a striking and most interesting picture. On his head is a grey drapery, called lelax, which folds tight round the face and under the chin; a garment, called the tonacella, covers the chest in plaits; the tunic, beneath, is of olive green. I am indebted to my clerical companion for this explanation of the costume. The poet's appearance is florid and handsome.

A small door, at the other end of the room, leads through a wall, four feet thick, to the tower, an appendage to all noble houses of that period. At one side is a bath—in front are the stairs, with a balustrade, leading to an arched loggia, or terrace, and looking down into the street. The tower appears to be about a hundred feet high;

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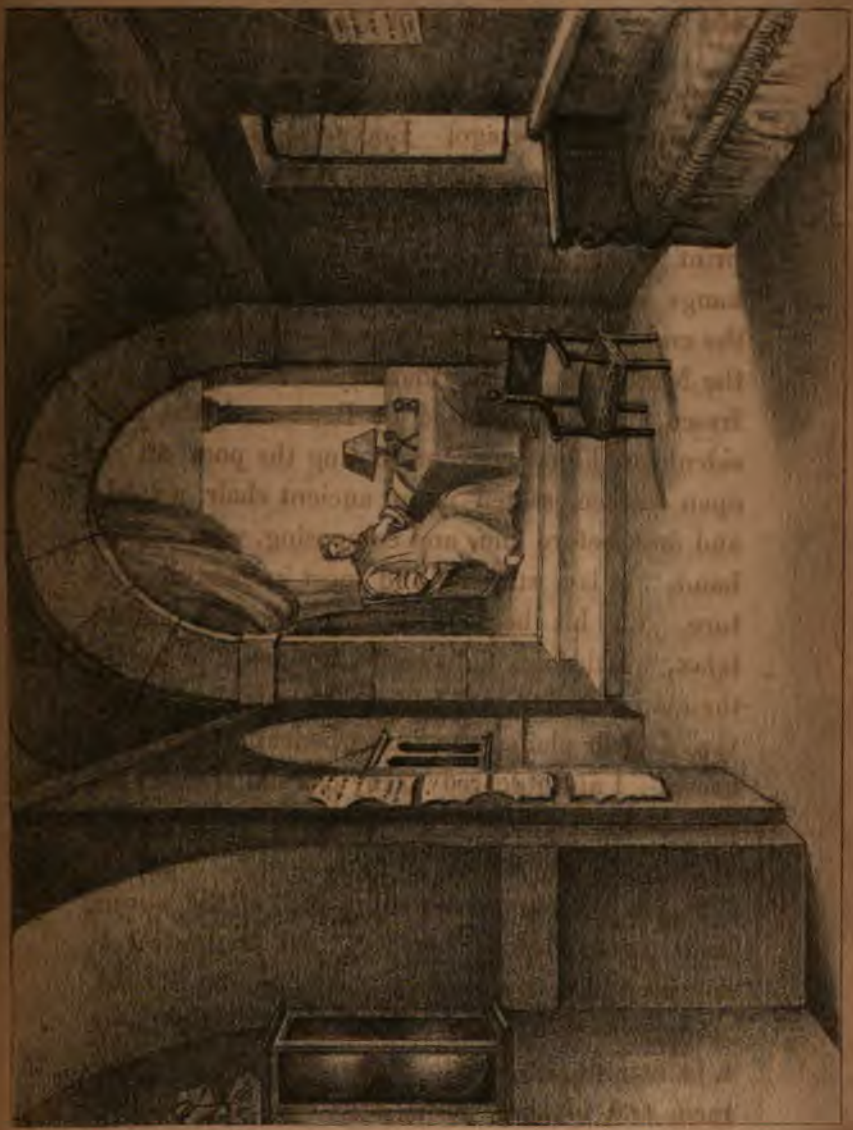

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the view from above forms a fine panorama of the Val d'Elba.

You may imagine how interesting it is to pass a morning under the roof of the illustrious dead, with objects around, with which he was familiar ; there is a peace and seclusion here, which I feel highly favourable to the indulgence of literary and romantic remembrance, and there is no guessing how much and how long I should indulge, were I not favoured with the company of a worthy priest of the neighbourhood, who, instead of translating the Latin inscriptions I have placed before him, in order to keep him quiet, prefers asking me various questions about England, our religion, and ritual. I always avoid controversy, and the Italians are too polite to remark on the differences between our creeds ; but it is pleasant to be able, without offending them, to give a reason for the faith we profess, though the inquiry be one of mere curiosity, as in the present instance. The good simple man hears with amazement of our missionaries, and of the power which has been intrusted by God to our privileged country ; of her colonies, and the millions she is permitted to govern, for the divine purpose, doubtless, as I told him, of sending light to the heathen, and fulfilling the glorious pro-

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mise, that the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth, as the waters cover the sea.

Even had our conversation, now just concluded, been controversial, it would not have been inappropriate under Boccaccio's roof, for although his works are not free from the licentiousness of the age in which he lived, yet, like Dante and Petrarch, he combated error, and prepared the way for the great changes of feeling and opinion which spread throughout Europe. Had his spirit been hovering over his ancient dwelling, he might have listened with unvexed ears to the curious colloquy, but I was obliged to curtail it, and let my obliging companion pursue his task of copying the inscriptions, for I cannot leave Boccaccio's roof without running over with you, some of the incidents of his life, as I remember them, referring to his works and commentators, in the little library, for verifying facts and dates.

It appears the poet, the natural son of a Florentine merchant, Boccaccio di Chellino, a man of distinguished descent, was born at Paris in 1313. His father wished to train him to his own pursuit, but from seven years old, he betrayed a genius, which ultimately resisted the trammels of trade. His parents sent him to travel, hoping he might acquire the love of gain, and learn

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the sweets of opulence ; but his ardour for erudition only increased, and at eighteen, the sight of Virgil's tomb, at Naples, so fired his imagination with poetry, that it was in vain his father obliged him to study canon law ; and it was there, beneath the laurel, which of old overshadowed the hallowed spot, that Boccaccio, then a handsome youth of twenty, with ebon locks falling on his shoulders, made that compact with literary fame, which he so ably fulfilled in after years. It was in that favourite haunt, that in 1341, he first met the champion of letters, Petrarch, whose coronation—the tribute of a grateful country—he witnessed in the capital, and whose friendship proved the most valuable possession of his life. After dutifully labouring for six years over, what he called, dry decrees, and meagre discussions, he devoted himself to the study of Greek, still spoken in Calabria, though neglected by the *savans* of the age. The desire of reviving its important literature in the country, prompted Boccaccio to send to Greece for a copy of Homer, and to invite a professor from Thesalonica to Florence, whom he retained in his own house, at an expense he could ill afford. He also studied sacred history, astronomy, and general literature, propitiating the muses with Latin as well as Italian verses.

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I cannot verify the fact or date from the books near me, but I remember having heard, that Prince Acciajoli, of a powerful Florentine family, had made him his secretary, and carried him to Naples, where that personage was grand seneschal of the kingdom.

Naples was just the element for Boccaccio's ardent imagination; he soon gained the favour of King Robert, a powerful patron of letters, and fell in love with his natural daughter, unfortunately a married woman, whom he celebrated throughout his writings under the name of Fiammetta. Very different was the Princess Maria, from the chaste object of Petrarch's passion; educated in the most corrupt court of Italy, it is to her depraved taste, we must attribute whatever is reprehensible in his books, particularly in the Decamerone, which he wrote by her order, to please her, and Queen Joanna, at whose court he played the troubadour, and repaid her welcome reception, by reading his tales of love and galantry, to amuse her guests. Handsome, elegant, and gay, he was soon snared, as Corniani, one of his biographers, curiously expresses it, by love; but there was more vanity than real attachment in his passion for Fiammetta. In 1348 he witnessed the terrible plague at Florence, and like

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Thucidides at Athens, wrote a description of it, elegantly and faithfully deliniating its horrors, without exciting disgust.

But how could a man who had witnessed death under its most awful aspect, make its scene the frame-work of his gayest and most licentious composition? The Decamerone, though the purest standard of Italian prose, and written with the utmost elegance of diction, variety, *naiveté*, and grace, breathes no purity of thought. Yet are these tales supposed to issue from the lips of seven noble Florentine ladies, and three cavaliers, who retired to a delightful villa in the Val' d' Arno, to avoid the contagion of the plague, where these merry hermits beguiled themselves for ten days, by recounting each a tale daily, thus amounting to one hundred.

The description of the scenery of these fêtes champêtres calls forth all the richness of Boccaccio's eloquent pen, and this is all I could say from my own knowledge. I hear men talk of the wit with which the tales abound, but few women could, I should think, be amused by them; at least, I have tried, in vain, to peruse even one, for the sake of the language.

The Decamerone was freely circulated in 1352. It was amongst the first books printed in the 15th

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century; it continued to be published and sold till prohibited by the council of Trent; it was allowed to appear again, purified and corrected, at the solicitation of the Grand Duke of Tuscany, after two curious negociations with Pius V. and his successor, Sixtus.

Our own Chaucer, and his contemporaries throughout Europe, borrowed and versified Boccaccio's tales; many of them were the popular stories of the period, and many he collected at the joyous courts he had frequented, and amongst his neighbours: the people of Certaldo are still said to excel in story telling. In his romance called "Fiammetta," Boccacio may be considered the inventor of that style of composition. Romances had been, Sismondi assures us, unknown to the ancients. Those of Byzantium, it is probable, Boccaccio never heard of; and the French romances of chivalry are quite in another style. He makes Fiammetta tell her own story, and the tale contains a heterogeneous melange of pagan mythology, and revealed religion. The heroine having first seen her Pamphile at mass, is persuaded to listen to him by the apparition of Venus!!

In "Felocopo," another romance, he alludes to the war between the chivalric Manfred of

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Sicily, and the usurper, Charles of Anjou; and represents the Pope as a priest of Juno, who, wishing to take vengeance on a descendant of the Roman emperors, for the desertion of Dido by Æneas, opposes, and persecutes the royal Suabian to the death.

The heroic poem, the Thesiade, was translated by Chaucer, and afterwards modernized by Dryden in Palemon and Arcite. I once saw a copy of it in Boccaccio's own hand writing, on vellum; the envied possessor is a collector of autographs at Florence: he had found it at Naples. The penmanship was beautiful. Boccaccio's passion for books stimulated him not only to make fair and elegant copies of his own writings, but to form for himself an extensive library. It is recorded that he presented to Petrarch the whole of Dante's "Divina Commedia," the works of Saint Augustine, and a Latin translation of Homer, all copied by himself. He also pursued this laborious occupation for gain, to improve his limited fortune, which was wonderful industry for a man of pleasure. It is as the father of Italian prose that Boccaccio is to be honored, and for his devotedness to the revival of classical literature in Italy. At his solicitation, a Greek professorship was established at Florence, in 1360, which proved the

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first spark of those literary glories, which illuminated the following century, and shed their classic light throughout Europe. Boccaccio and Petrarch, writes Corniani, attained celebrity and power, as the revisers and interpreters of antiquity ; yet the popular fame of both descends to posterity, sustained by their Italian writings alone, which they pursued as relaxations, placing their hopes of literary immortality in their Latin compositions. After Boccaccio left Naples, he was employed by the Florentine government, in various embassies to Polenta, Lord of Ravenna, to Louis of Brandenburgh, and to the Pope, both at Rome and at Avignon ; he also held a military magistracy ; and in 1368 he was appointed to a professorial chair, endowed for expounding the Divina Commedia, half a century after the death of the author, whom his ungrateful country had persecuted and banished. It appears to have been in the midst of this prosperity, that a Carthusian monk suddenly presented himself before Boccaccio to warn him, that a brother of his order, who had just expired in the odour of sanctity, had foretold the poet's days would be few, if he did not at once change his life and give up the world.

Astonished by a voice, as it were from the grave, Boccaccio was prompted to bury himself in

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the cloisters of the prophetic Carthusian; but happily he communicated to the wise Petrarch the appalling prediction, who soon calmed his terrors of conscience, and persuaded him, that to lead a Christian life, it was unnecessary to envelope his head in a cowl or to burn his books. It was then he retired to Certaldo, where, it is recorded, he repented the vices and vanity of his life, and found peace for his declining years. His change of heart is implied by his letters to Petrarch. In one he urges his friend to discourage the circulation of the Decamerone, for the sake of morality. Some of his biographers assert that he had assumed the ecclesiastical habit. His literary labours were relaxed, when reduced by disease, after the death of his friend, and it was then he complained of a letter's taking him three days to finish. He survived Petrarch but a year, and died on the 21st of December, 1375, on the spot where I now write.

This house appears to have been an object of veneration during the reign of the Medici, and the inscription on the tower was affixed by Cosmo II. It is not known when it fell into the hands of charcoal venders, who abound here now, as in the time of the poet.

I have just been asking my companion, if super-

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stition had ever appropriately attached a ghost story to this tenement. He laughed, and said no, but that there was a tradition of Boccaccio having been a wizard, and of his ordering the foul fiend, his master, to make him a green hill to walk upon; the evil one obeyed, and brought the earth, as usual, *all* in one night, in a basket; Boccaccio then built himself a *glass bridge*, which stretched across from the tower above to the green mound, where he used to go at night and converse with the fairies. This green hill still exists, and Charlotte has seen it from the tower, therefore, the tale must be true; and with this legend I must close my lucubrations from the poet's tenement, and go and look round the little town, whence he acquired the title of Il Certaldese.

Our first visit was to the church of St. Michael and St. James, whence it has been said, the "hyena bigots" of Certaldo, ejected the tombstone and remains of Boccaccio. I remember Lord Byron lets out his bitterest gall in anathematizing the foul deed, attributing this, and all the libels cast on the poet's memory, to the spleen of the churchmen he had piqued, by ridiculing and publishing their vices. But it now appears no unkindly feeling, on the part of either priesthood or laity, influenced the removal of his tombstone

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in 1783, but an erroneous interpretation of an excellent law of Leopold, against interment in churches—at least this is the defence set up; however, I have not yet heard it satisfactorily explained, why the stone and inscription, which marked the spot where he lay, should not at least have been transferred to a place of safety, instead of having been broken, and left to moulder amongst rubbish, in a corner of the cloister, for forty years after, when the Lady of Certaldo rescued it from final destruction. This is not consistent with that devotion, almost idolatrous, which Italians pay to their mighty dead, preserving every relic and association connected with their names as national consolations.

In 1503, the Podesta of Certaldo erected a fine monument to the poet in the church, which presents a half length statue of Boccaccio, pressing to his heart, with both hands, a folio, which, to my surprise, we found labelled, " Il Decamerone." The poet is habited as in the picture, and bears the same character of robust and manly beauty.

We next explored the Pretorian Palace, remarkable for its curious architecture, and covered over with armorial bearings of the ancient vicars, who held a civil appointment, involving, I believe, the duties of prefect. These arms are executed

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in that beautiful composition of Lucca della Robbia, and the more to be prized now, because the art is lost. They have the appearance of highly-varnished china, and the colours are fresh as at the first hour. The building is at the end of the street, and seen in the sketch.

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PIAZZA AT SVGEMIGNANO.

DELLE BELLE TORRE

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LETTER XXVIII.

Villa Medici, Certaldo,
Thursday.

THE Marchesa allowed us to dispatch an early breakfast, and to escape, before her rising this morning, on our pilgrimage to the top of the opposite mountain, where the towers of St. Gemignano rear their heads into the clouds.

After crossing a bridge, our way, for the first two miles, was through a rich pasture country; when we began to ascend, and soon found it necessary to seek for oxen, sometimes difficult to be obtained on roads so little frequented.

The way was long, and the reported seven miles had lengthened, at least, to nine or ten, before we reached the gates of St. Gemignano delle Belle Torre; we had cause to deplore the prolonged route, and above all, not having brought

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a guide, or some one experienced in the town; for, when we arrived, the inhabitants had dined, and gone to sleep!

It was with difficulty we found even an ostler to put up our horses, and there was no corn. Had there not been a meal-shop open, with a waking padrone, who sold maize, the poor animals would have had no provender after their long pull.

As for information, the two or three half somnambulists, who wandered about the streets, stared, when we asked a question, and we had no resource left but to explore for ourselves, with memory, assisted by imagination, as Ciceroni.

The picturesque piazza, once the forum, with its architectural fountain, proved the centre of attraction; from thence rise those seven or eight towers, which are now the only distinction of St. Gemignano.

The spirit of wandering having seized my husband, I foresaw no sketch would be achieved, if I did not try my own humble pencil; pushing open a door, which we found ajar, without waking the sleepers above, we sheltered ourselves in their hall, from the hot sun, where, without inconvenience, I could draw the deserted piazza before me. It was unpeopled, as a city of the dead;

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even the figures with which I have tried to enliven the great fountain, I was obliged to fancy, for no one came to draw water, or answer the questions we longed to ask respecting the objects around. It was in vain I called on those beacons of the past, the mighty towers before me, to respond.

First, I would know, when, and why, St. Gemignano had lost its ancient euphonous appellation of Silvio? and if it was indeed true, that King Desiderius, the last of the Lombards, had been its founder in the eighth century? or if, as another tradition pretends, the little city had a much earlier existence, and importance enough in the fifth, to attract the cupidity of Attila, whose march up the mountain was only arrested by the prayers of the prelate; for, like Jaddua, the high priest, who went forth from Jerusalem, dressed in his pontifical robes, to meet Alexander, and whose interference was seconded by a remarkable dream of the conqueror, so the bishop of St. Gemignano is reported to have descended in procession, to meet the dreaded barbarian invader, and by eloquent supplications, to have persuaded him to pass on, and leave the city in peace.

But it was in vain I inquired! The towers

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were dumb, and the questions remain, even to this hour, unanswered. I could only call over in my mind the few events recorded of St. Gemignano throughout that tangled tissue, the history of the middle ages, and they passed by me, as the vision of Don Roderick, in awful semblance, identifying themselves with the imposing scene around.

First, I remember, that Pope Eugene III., when returning from France to Rome, in 1148, honoured St. Gemignano with a visit, attended by seventeen cardinals, to consecrate the Basilica, which he raised from the humble rank of a parish church to the privilege of a cathedral, with the title of collegiate, and with various immunities. It cost the imagination little effort to fancy the procession of that day; first, the learned and aristocratic Benedictines, in their sable dress, traversing the piazza, two and two, with solemn step; then, the Augustines, looking reflective, inquiring, and, at the same time, subdued, were followed by a train of comely hermitesses of both these orders, which my imagination, perhaps improperly, led forth from their cells, in honor of the pontiff's visit. Then came the prebends, canons, and chaplains, of the newly-honoured church; and lastly, the pope, carried aloft, under

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a baldachino, or canopy, attended on each side by a file of cardinals, arrayed in their great hats and long scarlet robes.

Again, I saw the piazza peopled. A pavilion was raised in the midst, decked with the flowers of May. The citizens, landholders, and burghers of every town around, were assembled with their banners. The bells of every tower rang a merry peal. I fancied a clash of arms. The capitano and podesta entered the piazza, conducting an ambassador from Florence, to honour whom with a meeting, they had descended even to the plain. He came, deputed to acknowledge the services rendered by St. Gemignano to the republic, in troops and money, during their long conflicts, before and after their great victory over the Ghibellines of Arezzo, at Campaldino; and he was commissioned to counsel the state against petty warfare with Volterra and its own dependancies, urging all, heartily, to join the Florentine league in favour of the Guelphs. The dignified ambassador was Dante Alighieri!!! I saw the poet of rectitude—the master-spirit of ages yet unborn, in the pride of manhood! Me-thought all ranks were impressed by the honour Florence had conferred on their city by selecting one so revered. Dante had already represented the great republic

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at many courts, and lastly, at that of Charles of Anjou, at Naples. It was with his son, Charles Martel, that the ambassador formed a friendship almost fraternal. That prince, who should have been King of Hungary, in right of his mother, died young, and his mourning friend placed him in his "paradiso," singing hosannas of love!—Canto viii.

My next vision was, the erection of the great tower opposite, over the piazza publico, an imposing edifice, frowning in its strength, and belonging to an age of more apparent faith in the world's duration than ours, for it seems to have been built for eternity. I remembered that the commune, stimulated by the fastidiousness of the proud collegiate church, about permitting their bells to ring on public occasions, had resolved to erect a noble tower for themselves, to which the podesta, who was elected every six months, was obliged to contribute three hundred *lire* of that day, (about ten pounds sterling,) with the privilege of having his arms sculptured in marble and inserted in the masonry on the façade of the tower; and then, me-thought I saw the gigantic tower finished, which had stood 550 years, though struck again and again by lightning; and I fancied I heard the tolling of its ponderous

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bell, which weighed twelve thousand pounds, and was audible throughout all the territory of St. Gemignano.

The peal died away: I mused again, and remembered that the St. Gemignanians, alarmed by the tyranny exercised by the Duke of Athens, at Florence, in 1343, had thrown off the yoke of the republic, and attempted that task, always difficult for a little state, to govern themselves. Internal broils were the inevitable consequences, and imagination filled the piazza with the fiery partizans of the Ardinghelli and Salucci, two powerful families, whose rancour and dissentions kept the people in constant ferment for ten years. It was in vain the consul and authorities commanded peace. Me-thought I saw the many-coloured banners of each house, *contrade*, or guild, with their various devices, waving and fluttering in the air, while borne aloft by their excited followers: strife, and a clash of arms succeeded, and groans of the wounded and dying, closed the fancied scene.

"A change came over the spirit of my dream." I beheld the piazza formed into an arena. The consul, his four colleagues, eight priori, and the podesta, had taken their seats, with the principal citizens and landholders, habited in the quaint

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and picturesque costume of the period. In the centre was a vase, on a raised platform, with a veil over it. Two blooming boys, dressed as pages, were its guardians; for the future fate of St. Gemignano and its territory was to be decided by ballot. These children had been chosen from the two rival families, and placed there at the request of their tender mothers, who hoped their innocence and smiles might soften the obdurate hearts of the contending parties.

The Ardinghelli had given their voice with that of the people, in favour of an appeal to Florence, to settle their differences, and to govern the state. But the Salucci were still opposed to the measure, and I fancied the murmurs of the citizens while inserting their votes in the vase. Amongst them, an old burgher seemed to lament, "that the independence which Barbarossa spared, and which even the fiery and ambitious Charles of Anjou had left undisturbed, should be lost by internal dissentions." Anon, me-thought, *vivas*, mixed with groans, rent the air. The fate of St. Gemignano was decided! and the children held up in their rosy fingers the single bean, which fixed their country's doom. Its colour was portentous —black! and groans prevailed; but there was no alternative. Florence must be supplicated to

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be their nursing mother.* Anon, I saw a procession of the chief citizens and landed proprietors, cross the piazza, to the number of two hundred and fifty, and commence their march towards the Val d' Arno. The great republic, by showing a disinterested reluctance to interfere in their dissentions, had proved herself worthy of their confidence and voluntary submission.

The great bell sent forth a solemn peal as the deputies left the town. Its tolling seemed, to my imagination, the harbinger of death, for the plague rushed on my memory, which had thirteen times ravaged the city during two hundred and twenty years! It was in vain, in compliance with the superstition of the period, that votive pictures had been ordered to propitiate heaven. The town was enriched with a fine St. Sebastian, and a crucifixion, by Gazzoli, and various other oblations had been placed in the churches. As a last resource, the first Sunday in August had been appointed a festival, and dedicated to Santa Fina: nevertheless, the scourge appeared, and again and again made fearful ravages. In 1418, it was brought by Paola, a lady of the house of Colonna, who, with some lords of Piombino, sought a re-

* This decision took place in 1353.

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treat from its contagion, and were humanely, though unadvisedly, admitted by the commune, after which two thousand of the citizens fell a prey to the terrible disease. I had recently been perusing Boccaccio's description of the plague at Florence, and only yesterday we had contemplated its too faithful representation in wax, of which it has been well said, that if the figures were the size of life, no person would be found with sufficient courage to gaze upon it—my mind was full of the subject.

In the midst of the piazza, imagination fearfully depicted the dead and the dying; the wretched poor, who had no home and no friends; and those who, having lost all dear to them, were driven, by despair, from their tenantless dwellings, to seek sympathy abroad, and had been overtaken by the levelling scourge in the streets.

Rushing close by these prostrate victims, in horrible contrast, I fancied a group of the heartless idiots, who believed mirth and revelry to be an antidote to contagion. Each, I thought, held a flagon of wine, from which he quaffed deep draughts, between every burst of ribald mirth. Mocking and jesting, nay, insulting, outraging, and plundering the poor sufferers at his feet, whose weakness and indifference rendered them

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equally unresisting. And on the other side, I perceived a party of those who believed perfumes a safeguard against infection. In one hand they carried large bouquets of flowers; in the other, potent herbs, drugs, and spices, which they flung about, indifferent, like the others, to the horrors around them, caring but for themselves, even though the dying had been their parent, their children, their best friends!! And then imagination pourtrayed the fatal bier, loaded with a promiscuous heap of half putrid bodies: no priest, no attendant followed. The mercenary *becchini*, paid by the state, alone conveyed the wealthy, the proud, the beautiful, and the good, to the hole where their remains were to mingle in one heap of putrefaction.

At last, overcome by my own imaginations, I started up, exclaiming audibly, "I'll see no more," to the surprise and alarm of Charlotte, who was sauntering about the piazza, while I was drawing and dreaming of the past. However, my sketch was achieved, and we hastened in search of Colonel Stisted, who had wandered down a steep hill, out of the Colle gate, to see a chapel, founded by the knights templars, and view the ivied walls and towers from the opposite side. We met him on his return, in the principal street,

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where we found a few straggling priests coming forth, rubbing their eyes, and soon the sacristan of the duomo came, wide awake, to offer his services.

The collegiate church is sadly neglected;* it contains many frescos going to ruin, and a large one, the life of Christ, has a tragical story attached to it, of the artist, Berna, of Sienna, who fell from the scaffolding while painting it, and was killed. He had no friend near, gifted with presence of mind, to throw a brushful of colour at his picture, and by exciting his wrath, compel him to rush forward, as in the remarkable instance of Sir James Thornhill, who, when painting the dome of St. Paul's, was at the very edge of the scaffolding, observing his work, and about retiring another step, when the admirable alertness of his assistant, saved him from an awful death.

In the chapel of Santa Fina are two frescos of Ghirlandaio. There are several others bearing celebrated names, but all was dark and cheerless, and we were more interested in taking a look at the Augustine convent, which, as well as I could understand from the sacristan's mysterious indi-

* The duomo has been beautifully restored since the above was written: a friend we sent there found it rich and brilliant.

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cation, had been suppressed at the time of the Reformation; and that of the Dominicans, which lodged two hundred monks, had shared the same fate for Jansenism, in 1787, after an existence of four hundred and fifty years! Our informant, hinted something about *errori pericolosi* which had spread over *la nostra Toscana*. He also muttered the name of Ricci, Bishop of Pistoja, and mentioned his protector, the great Leopold, but as if afraid of the subject, he hurried us from the convent to the church of the Augustines, where he became garrulous about a certain *Fra Dominico Strambi*, who, he assured us, had left a high reputation at the University of Oxford, and also in Paris. He lived in the beginning of the fifteenth century, and was denominated the *Dottore Parigino*, from his French celebrity.* He appears to have been wealthy, for he erected a double cloister to the convent, and enriched the church with a cross of considerable value, several silver chalices, and various valuables, all stolen

* A fine fresco, by Mainardo, of this liberal patron, has lately been rescued from a coat of whitewash, with which some Goth had defaced several which formerly adorned the church. Fra Dominico Strambi is dressed in the robes of his order, and extended on a monument, with his hands raised in the attitude of prayer.

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two hundred years after! He also employed [illegible] to paint the Life of St. Augustine in seventeen compartments, commencing with the cradle, and ending with the tomb, which, fortunately, remain, and are so good, that recently the Cavalier Nesti, of Siena, thought them worth engraving, in order to rescue them from oblivion. This painter's pride was to excel in the school of simple nature, from which he never deviated. The altar of St. Bartolo is also admirable—it is by the sculptor Sansovino, who had even before the time of Michael Angelo, produced works full of truth, purity, and grace. On his alto-relievo over this altar, the eye reposes with perfect satisfaction.

There is also the old convent of St. Jerome, which existed since 1110, except during six years of the recent French dynasty. It is now enriched by the discovery of a considerable copper mine on its property.

We heard with interest of a conservatorio for young ladies, in the old convent of St. Chiara, founded by the great Leopold, who was present at its opening. I lamented we could not delay to see an establishment which owed its existence to so admirable a prince.

There are also two Latin free-schools for boys,

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and one for writing and arithmetic. The little commune sends four youths to the universities of Pisa, Florence, and Rome, to study at their expense.

The population of the town is above six thousand. The civil authorities are a podesta and cancelliere. Criminal causes are referred to the jurisdiction of Colle.

St. Gemignano has twenty parish churches. I could not ascertain how many convents are left; several are in ruins. That of the Dominicans is now a house of correction for delinquent females, who are sent there to labour and repent, from all parts of the Grand Duchy.

The city also possesses an hospital, with fifty beds: one of the best in Tuscany.

The excellent wine and oil of the hills around are extolled by the poet Redi.

The journey back was more rapid, but no less fatiguing from the inequalities of the mountain road. Casting a look behind, during our descent, we saw St. Gemignano crowning the mountain summit; her beautiful towers forming the rays of the mural diadem which encircles her brows. It is a great satisfaction to have seen this romantic and beautiful little city, where, strange to say, we never heard of an English carriage

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having ever before ascended. We were indebted to that accomplished artist, Signor Liverati, of Florence, for knowing there was such a place in existence; and if the few events of its history, which I have been able to call up, have rendered it interesting, you may form some idea, how deep, intense, and general is the feeling excited throughout every part of a country thus eloquent of the past.

Farther on, we passed near the village of Gambassi, memorable as the birth place of a blind artist, who worked with marvellous success in the school of Lucca della Robbia, not only modelling with accuracy, delicacy, and grace, but colouring his subjects by an instinct which is difficult to comprehend. The sense of feeling is so exquisite in those who are deprived of sight, that many blind persons have been known to appreciate colours; one individual compared scarlet to the sound of the trumpet.

In the same direction, very different feelings were excited, by being pointed out Persenna, where those unhappy innovators, the Socini, drew their first breath, early in the sixteenth century. How extraordinary it is that cavillers about the divinity of Christ in the Roman Church should ever have found proselytes in ours. "We

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soon swept them out," said a worthy prelate to me, "such cold heartless doctrines could never have spread in Italy."

Amongst the mountains towards Sienna, we were desired to look for Vergelle, the reputed birth-place of the whimsical Razzi, who, although Julius II. obliterated his frescoes in the Vatican, to make room for Raphael, is admired for chiascura, fine perspective, and playful imagery. Some assert, to account for his superiority to the Siennese school, in the expression of his female heads, and the breadth and richness of his colouring, that it was at Vercelle, in the north of Italy, he was born, and that he studied the works of Leonardo da Vinci, in Lombardy, before he settled at Sienna. Professor Rosini, in his historical romance of "Louisa Strozzi," gives a ludicrous description of a young cavalier's visit to the painter, in his own domicile, where, after repeatedly knocking at the door, he heard, *Chi é?* who's there? croaked by a raven, who, it appeared, acted as porter to the eccentric Razzi. The painter, warned by the well-trained bird, pulled the string above; the door opened; the youth entered; a monkey jumped on his back, pulled off his cap, and putting it on his own head, hopped up stairs to announce the visitor, who fol-

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lowed in amazement, and might have fancied himself in Noah's ark, so various and extraordinary was the company he found above; badgers, squirrels, jackdaws, parrots, jays, magpies, and many more which I have forgotten. Razzi had just finished painting a bier. It was for one of those societies called *Confraternita della Morte*, who devote themseves in every city, to carrying the dead to the church, and afterwards to the sepulchre. I can give you no better instance of the love of art, which pervaded Italy in the middle ages, than this example of a great painter being employed to adorn even the trappings of the grave.

The Marchesa had kindly deferred her dinner hour. She was amused at hearing we had found the whole community asleep, and lamented not having thought of sending some one with us. Her clerical neighbours came again this evening to pay their devoirs, which gave me an opportunity of drawing from them much of the local information I have been giving you. For the historical part I am chiefly indebted to an ancient volume, the "Annali di St. Gemignano," and to my note-book, which had been already supplied with some details respecting the mountain city, by Signore Montazio, a popular author, who is a principal contributor

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to many of the periodicals now publishing at Florence, particularly "Il Mendo Contemporane." His prolific pen is working unremittingly to disseminate useful knowledge.

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LETTER XXIX.

Villa Medici, Certaldo,
Friday.

From the conversation last night, I find that St. Gemignano claims having given birth to many illustrious men; but I shall only mention those whose names are connected in history.

There was Niccoli Pesciolini, an accomplished cavalier, of the sixteenth century, who had a long and brilliant career of popularity. The Grand Duke Francis I. who married the celebrated Venetian beauty, Bianca Capello, installed him a Knight of St. Stephen, and he was afterwards employed in negociating peace between Giovanni de Medici, and the Duke de Guise, and in recovering the city of Marseilles for France, for which service he received a largess of three thousand golden crowns, and a pension from Henry IV.

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In the following reign, the Cardinal Grand Duke Ferdinand, ordered John Bologna to execute an equestrian statue of that monarch, as a present to the chivalric husband of his niece, Princess Maria de Medici; but the king, the grand duke, and the sculptor, were all gathered to their fathers before the great work could be completed. Cosmo II. had the statue finished by Tacca, and appointed the Cavaliere Pesciolini ambassador, to present it to Louis XIII. When the Tuscan artisans, who accompanied him to Paris, uncovered the bronze, it was found to be so fine a likeness of the lamented king, that for several days the Pont-neuf was impassable, from the crowds which assembled to contemplate it. The name of Pesciolini is on the base.*

At the same period, the annals of St. Gemignano piously record amongst her sons, the *Senator Curzio da Picchena*, whose youth was remarkable for genius, and intense application to study. He devoted himself particularly to the works of Tacitus, that profound philosopher and lively depictor of manners in a corrupt age, to whose precepts are attributed the deep knowledge of

* His monument, surmounted by a bust, is in the church of St. Augustine, at St. Gemignano. He died in 1619.

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legislation, acquired by this distinguished Tuscan, which obtained for him the applause of the four reigns he adorned. Picchena was not long permitted to remain in private life. The Grand Duke Francis I. employed him in various embassies, and it is to his excellent diplomacy that Tuscany was indebted, in the time of Ferdinand, for shaking off the yoke of Spain. By Cosmo II. he was made minister and senator, and at his death left regent. It was to that enlightened prince, who could bear the truth, even from a subject, that Picchena dedicated his "Comments on Tacitus." The excellent statesman was esteemed by all his contemporaries as the mirror of probity. Above all, Galileo, his constant companion and friend, honoured and lauded his rare virtues. You will find an interesting conversation bearing much on the politics of the period, and the achievements of Picchena, in Professor Rosini's "Monaca di Monza," which only requires some knowledge of Italian history in the reader, to render it an interesting work.

Vincenzo Tamagni, or St. Gemignano, as Pilkington calls him, must not be omitted, for he worked in the Vatican under Raphael, who was "the sunshine of his soul, and like a flower, he lived and flourished in his light," but drooped

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and produced nothing worthy of note, after the sack of Rome, by Charles V. which divided him from his beloved master. This partial friend, and prince of painters, encouraged, and often assisted his compositions, and is reported to have loved Tamagni with brotherly affection.

I was agreeably surprised to discover that Poccetti, the painter, was of a St. Gemignian family, though the Tuscan capital claims his birth. We look on him as a particular acquaintance, from having dined for some months in an apartment painted, in fresco, by his spirited hand—one, amongst three hundred rooms of the noble Palazzo Acciajola, in Florence, (now the excellent hotel D'Arno). The artist had determined not to be forgotten, for amongst various subjects, sacred and profane, the best thing in the room is his own portrait, in a corner, near a door, and a curious little stunted being he must have been! The real name of this whimsical genius was Bernardino Barbatelli. His father was an humble potter. From eight years old, his passion for drawing shewed itself in bold sketches, on every wall he passed. It was while indulging his genius on the outside of a church one day, that Ghirlandaio was struck with the freedom and spirit of his hand, and took the boy home with

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him. His first lesson was to draw an eye, his master being occupied on a scaffold above, painting a large pannel. Ghirlandaio was extremely surprised, on descending, to find that his young pupil, instead of the eye, had made a marvellous sketch of himself, the pannel, and the ladder. This youth's progress was rapid, and as his style varied and improved, he required a succession of sobriquets. At first he was *Bernardino delle Grotesche*, which speaks for itself; next, Bernardino *delle Facciate*, because he excelled in painting the exterior of houses, which it was then the fashion to cover with a variety of subjects; and lastly, he was called Bernardino delle Muse, from having beautifully represented the sacred nine, on the façade of a palace still existing, close to Schneider's hotel, in Florence. That of Poccetti, he never lost, because it described his diminutive stature. He afterwards went to Rome, as a wider field for his genius, and becoming enamoured of the works of Raphael, he gave his nights and days to contemplating and reflecting on them, in order that no other object should distract him from studying and imbibing their sublime lessons: he shut himself up in his apartments for many months, receiving his frugal meals through a

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wheel* in the wall, and never going out but to the Vatican. The result of this devotedness seems to have been a resolution to imitate nature only, in all her works, and we find Poccetti representing landscapes, figures, animals, flowers, fruits, and vegetables, to the life. The churches and palaces of Florence abound in his frescoes and pictures. I have given you the pith of what Baldinucci says in a long article respecting the little genius, because other biographers have passed him over altogether.

The neighbourhood of St. Gemignano has had recently to lament the loss of a truly Christian pastor, Ignazio Malenotti, a worthy disciple of his divine Master, who preached the Gospel, I am assured, in all its purity from the pulpit, and inculcated its precepts upon the hearts of his flock. He instructed their children, encouraged agriculture, and employed his pen unremittingly

* Several palaces in Italy are provided with these wheels, besides the Quirinal, where the cardinals are shut up during the conclave. It was formerly a general custom in great Italian families to impose monastic laws upon their household, and keep the male and female domestics apart. The apartment of the women was always provided with a wheel, in order that their dinner might be served without even seeing the cook. The custom has declined, but is not altogether discontinued. It would be considered a horrible barbarism by our English Abigails.

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for their moral improvement and temporal advantages. "The Master Farmer," "The Shepherds," and "Vignerol's Manuals"—a book on planting—and various articles in the agrarian and commercial journals, published at Florence, have ranked him amongst the benefactors of his country.

The Marchese Ridolfi, accompanied by all the members of his institution, went to visit this excellent divine, as a public testimony of their esteem and veneration, and many academies have enrolled his name amongst their elite. We shall always lament not having been here in time to become personally acquainted with him, to add his name also to our long list of Italian worthies. He was called to his rest two years since. How many such men have we had to deplore in Italy, who were all labouring for the benefit of a country, which stands so greatly in need of active conscientious friends!

The truly patriotic Marchese Ridolfi is happily in the prime of life. This Tuscan noble may be counted amongst the living consolations of Italy. A providence has attended his career, which it is delightful to record, because one cannot doubt the Christian source from whence his philanthropy is derived. Early employed in the

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government of his country, as director of the mint, some enemies, then in power, contrived, by an artful slander, to throw an imputation on his loyalty. The calumniated noble retired in dignified silence to his estates, and tried to forget the contumely of the court in agricultural pursuits. The grand duke, too just a prince to be long deceived, soon discovered the perfidy which had, for the moment, imposed on him, and at once dismissed his minister of police, who had assisted to banish four devoted nobles from his government. He dismissed him amidst the cheers and vivas of his people. His royal highness would then have recalled the Marchese Ridolfi, but the modern Cincinnatus preferred his plough and his fields; deeming the improvements of agriculture to be the most important benefit he could render to his country. He formed an institute for the education of the Tuscan youth, and laid out his own estates for their practical instruction, even receiving them into his family mansion, to the number of eight-and-twenty. The sons of the aristocracy contributed about £50 a year to the general fund; the sons of the peasantry were received gratis, and a second table provided for them. The morning commenced with family prayer, in the great hall; the supplication and

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thanksgiving were the more salutary for being in Italian (not in Latin), and suited to the position and circumstances of the young assembly, who then separated for their various avocations, practical or theoretical. "We were always happy at Meleto," said one of the pupils to me, "for we were always occupied." Besides mathematics, geology, botany, and every branch of science connected with agriculture, these youths have an opportunity of acquiring modern languages, and much general information in the society of their admirable patron and master, who admitted them to his family circle, and conducted them wherever there was any thing improving to be learnt or observed. One of these excursions was to this neighbourhood, to visit Melanatti. It took place after the Pisa congress, when the whole section of agronomy repaired to Meleto, to inspect the Marchese's agricultural seminary.

I cannot take leave of St. Gemignano and its worthies, without more particularly introducing you to the distinguished individual, whose good taste first decided us to explore its stores of interest and art. Charles Ernest Liverati, besides being a beautiful painter, is an excellent classical scholar, has the claims of a countryman on our hearts, his excellent father having been director

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of the Italian opera house in London for many years. Our friend drew his first breath in England, and received his early education in our schools. He possesses the highest qualifications of both countries; his Italian imaginative fervor and deep feeling are regulated, but not destroyed, by English sobriety and good sense. He is gifted with the noble principles of both countries, and the combination is all we could desire in character. Cavaliere Liverati is an accomplished historian and archologist; his intellectual stores fit him for the noblest branches of his art. The first work of his spirited pencil, with which we became acquainted was, "Galileo defending his system before the Inquisition." The painting was already gone to its purchaser in England: we only saw the sepia drawing, but it was sufficiently beautiful to excite our highest admiration of the composition. In the gloomy hall of judgment, and beneath an awful crucifix, sat the five inquisitors, around a table—the flame of a powerful lamp, in the centre, is entirely shaded by a burley monk, the back of whose tonsured head and broad shoulders, appears above the heavy Gothic chair he occupies. A strong light falls on the various countenances of all around. On an ancient raised chair, at the head of the table, sits

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the chief inquisitor. The compassionless expression of the wiry features, which appear from beneath his cowl, leave nothing to hope for the dignified prisoner who stands before him; while the curved lines of his aquiline nose and compressed lips, are repeated in the position of the bony hand, and again, in the eagle-head and sharp beak of the carved arm-chair in which it rests—the other hand pressed the chin. To his left sits the scowling secretary, taking down the minutes of the examination, to which he listened with the anxiety of one eager to condemn. Before the monk, seated at the foot of the table, are placed a sphere and a book, on a raised desk. I cannot remember if it is Galileo's manuscripts or the Scriptures, which the examiner is pertinaciously turning over, to prove that Joshua, having ordered the sun to stand still, it must of necessity have moved before. To the left stands the philosopher, patiently endeavouring to explain his system to the dull apprehensions of his ignorant and bigoted judges; one only of whom, a younger monk, to the right, less hardened in self-righteousness, is touched with compassion for the venerable prisoner, and seems just awakening to consciousness that he may be right, while his countenance bespeaks deep commisseration. Behind

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the prisoner stands his gaoler, and beneath his feet the iron grate, indicating the prison where he is to expiate the sin of having advanced, in wisdom and science, beyond the age in which he lived. I can do no justice in description to the skill with which this circular composition is treated, or the speaking expression of every countenance. The gifted artist told us, that having occasion to seek a physician in haste one night for his father, (who is in suffering health, and to whom he is devoted heart and soul,) he ran into the laboratory of the Santa Maria Novella Convent, the dispensary being closed, and came suddenly on a group of monks, preparing the essences for which those brethren are celebrated. They were seated around a table, with a lamp in the centre ; the flame being shaded by one of their figures, a strong light shone on their various countenances, and produced the striking effect which suggested the picture. The young and compassionate monk is the portrait of a friend who accompanied him, and who proposed his selecting a subject in which the effect could be produced with advantage. Cavaliere Liverati's colouring is of the Venetian school, and strongly recembles that of Giorgione. We have a portrait, by him, of a youth in the costume of a falconer, with a hawk on his wrist,

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which is always taken for a Venetian picture. The last time we were in his studio, he was finishing a beautiful little domestic scene, "The good Tuscan family;" a lovely young wife plaiting straw at the cottage door, a cradle by her side, with a child rocking it, and the aged mother spinning within. This subject is so beautifully treated, that our friend has been obliged to repeat it again and again for English collectors. In the last Florence exhibition was a painting of his, which the Grand Duke purchased—it represented a contadina being churched.* We did not see the picture, but one can fancy the gorgeous church, and its accessaries, the rich jeweled costume of the peasant group, contrasted with their meek piety and humble devout demeanour. The painters of past ages have all had a vast advantage in possessing a subject of never-failing interest to represent. That of a lovely mother, and her beautiful infant, and the groups has been portrayed so many thousand times, and in so many thousand ways, that we have long supposed the theme exhausted; yet has Signore Liverati's poetic mind suggested a holy family, which was

* La Donna che rientra in Santo.

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never, I believe, thought of before, and one imbued with the most exquisite sentiment. Our friend showed us the first sketch in which he embodied his pure and happy thought. The meek and lovely Mary was seated on a bank, the divine child knelt at her feet, and held up a blossom, of which he seemed eagerly to inquire the name—it was the Passion Flower! and all the expression which a prophetic view of the emblem could be supposed to awaken, was in the countenance of that tender mother.*

To compensate for so poor an illustration of a sublime thought, I enclose you an ode addressed to Cavaliere Liverati, by Professor Charles Morren, who fills the chair of botany at the University of

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* Signor Liverati has painted this interesting subject since the above was written. The group is, I understand, detached upon a warm oriental sky, and hills, with palm trees behind, throw a shadow on the Virgin's brow: in the distance are seen the Nile and the Pyramids, with the Granite mountains behind. A beautiful model sat for the Madonna—the Duchess of Dino—and "Our Lady of the Passion Flower" is now receiving its last touches. The author is engaged on a new subject for Prince Demidoff—a group of Tuscan children preparing a fête before a tabernacle of a Giotta Madonna. Cavaliere Liverati is in fact too fine a painter even for Florence: he should be at Rome, where art has more encouragement, but filial devotedness to his father's declining health retains him in the Tuscan capital. His Studio, No. 445, Bargo degli Albizzi, is an intellectual resource of the highest order.

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Liege. This gentleman had distinguished himself at the scientific congress of Florence, and had seen the sketch, which his poetic mirror has beautifully reflected :—

C' etait aux champs feconds de l' Egypte pompeuse,
Un enfant dans les fleurs cherchait la plus heureuse,
Cet enfant sur son front, d' un cercle lumineux
Portait, venu d' en haut, le signe radieux.
De ses yeux devant qui se devoilait toute ame,
Un regard sur humain dardait sa sainte flamme,
Et dans sa douce voix, si pleine de bonté
On retrouvait le ciel et l' immortalité !
A ses cotès, sa mere attentive et reveuse
Tantot suivant ses jeux et tantot on oublieuse
Semblait de l' avenir sondant les durs arrêts,
Dans le choix d' une fleur surprendre des secrets.

Parmi ces perles d' or, emblems de la vie,
Qui semé sous nos pas, la nature embellie,
Il en fut une blanche, au calice d' azur,
Qui semblait dans son sein, du parfum le plus pur,
Récéder la douceur et doubler le prestige ;
Austère, vers les cieux, elle tendait sa tige,
Jettant sa feuille au vent comme on jette ses jours
Au destin, au malheur, à des saintes amours ;
Et quoique fille née aux bois de nouveau monde,
Sous un ciel ètrange inconnue son fruit,
Tant egare le sort ce qui le vent conduit.

Par des liens nerveux ses branches retombantes,
Et des ramaux voisins se liaient verdoyantes,
Sa tige a d' une croix l'aspect redoutè,
Sa feuille surgissant d'un tombeau tachetè
Montre a l'œil etonnè cinq profonds blessures ;
On s'arrête tremblant, a de si noirs augures.

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De plus tristes pensées si lisent dans ces fleurs :
Dix petals sont là comme autant de douleurs,
Leur front si pale a ceint la couronne d' epines,
Le lieu de la torture en leur sein s'enracine
Et porte a son sommet les trois cloux de la croix.
Sur cette fleur l'enfant avait fixé son choix.

Sur sa branch il la prit, et courant a sa mère :
" Quelle est, lui dit-il, cette fleur si sevère ?
Comment la nomme-t-on ? et puis, explique-nous
Son language, ma mère, et je t'ecoute a genoux :
Chaque fleur a, dis-tu, son nom et son emblème,
Mère, dis-nous, ceux-ci, car cette fleur je l'aime !"
Marie en tresaillant promena les doux yeux
De la fleur á son fils, de cette fleur aux cieux ;
Moïse a son esprit, rappelle la Messie,
Elle fit dans la fleur parler la prophètie :
" Son nom, dit elle, c'est fleur de la passion ;
Son emblème, c'est toi Christ ! la redemption !"

Our kind hostess has insisted on detaining us yet another day, that Colonel Stisted may make a coloured drawing of the Pretorian Palace, and a sketch of the church, where Fra Cipolla's adventure occurred.

The Lady of Certaldo has been showing us an ancient medal of Boccaccio, which has been presented to her, in testimony of her patriotism, in rescuing his tomb from neglect, and his domicile from decay. She has enriched us with what may be called a model of the valuable medal—in fact its counterpart. One side presents the poet in the same head-dress he wears in the fresco ; on the

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reverse is a female figure, holding a serpent, which puzzles the medallists—prudence not having been an attribute of the poet.

While my painter has been trying to transfer Fra Cipolla's church to his sketch-book, I have been a drive with the Marchesa, through her grounds and farms, and amongst her contadini. She wished me particularly to observe their courteous manners, and to hear the pure Italian for which the peasants of the duchy are remarkable. Here each family is lodged in a large, square, solid, detached building of stone, two stories high, with projecting roofs and *loggie*, or galleries, communicating with the rooms above, where are hung the household stores of flax, hemp, and yarn, of the good wife's spinning, and the herbs of their little pharmacopia. Within we found all that is solidly useful—large high beds, without curtains, clean bed-linen and coverlits, of their own manufacture, a few tables, chairs, and chests.

The worthy contadini gave their Signora as courteous a reception as she could have received in any aristocratic drawing-room. After many inquiries about her health, they discussed her sea voyage, wondering at her courage to venture on the waves, and declaring how reluctantly they would submit to such a necessity. There was a

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calm dignified bearing and tone about these peasants, which would become many of higher pretensions. No flattery, no *mauvais honte*, no effort to curry favor, or put themselves forward—no boast of works of supererogation during their padrona's absence.

Wishing me to taste the white wine of a particular *podere*, the Marchesa intimated her desire to the contadina, who brought us a decanter and glasses to the vineyard, where we had taken our seats, presenting us with nice white napkins, a custom never omitted in Italy, by the poorest, although you ask but a glass of water at their door. Our hostess seemed to feel great pride and satisfaction in her tenantry. At her desire, some beautiful cattle were led out from the stable for me to admire; they were very nearly the milk-white steers of Clytumnus, and magnificent animals.

I can readily believe Italy may owe its appellation to this noble and useful race. The Cavaliere Visconti, a high name in such matters, first mentioned his belief of the fact to us in Rome, giving the derivation from the Greek word Vitello; in the Oscan language, Italia was written Vitalia.

The Marchesa has been entertaining us on our way home with an account of Napoleon's

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coronation at Milan. She was near enough to the emperor to hear the remarkable words he pronounced in placing the iron crown on his own head: "Dieu me l'a donnée, gare à qui la touche." Then a young bride, our old friend Baron Denon, who was by her side, enabled her, by his delightful conversation, to support four hours of waiting, from seven in the morning, before the absorbing interests of the grand ceremony commenced. He first beguiled her with an eloquent description of the Paris coronation, and afterwards carried her to Egypt, and delighted her by his graphic details of his own travels there. How many happy hours have we listened with breathless interest to that best of *raconteurs*, and kindest of men, with his fine drawings of Egypt, and its wonders of art before us. I look back at the months we were almost domesticated with Denon, and enjoying the illustrious society by which he was surrounded, as the Augustine age of our lives!

We take leave of our agreeable hostess early to-morrow, and return to Lucca, where we shall pass Sunday. The autumn is too far advanced for a more protracted tour this year.

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LETTER XXX.

COLONEL Stisted started this morning in a calessino for St. Gemignano by another road, hoping to find a spot from whence the little mountain city, and its beautiful towers, may be sketched for you with advantage. We, in the meantime, pursued our way to meet him, seven miles off at Poggibonsi; we were curious to explore a place which we had so often passed with indifference, and which some recently acquired knowledge of Italian history has rendered highly interesting. It was in the plain around this now insignificant little town, that a great armament assembled in 1313, which had been for three years the terror of Italy, and destined, it was supposed, to overthrow the Florentine republic in its Guelphic

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strength. Two thousand German knights, reputed invincible in arms, were commanded by the Emperor Henry VII. in person, supported by all the Ghibeline faction; but the success which attended the imperial troops against other cities, prevailed not at Poggibonsi; it sustained two months' menaces, and two months' siege, without even shutting a gate, except that towards the enemies' camp: the whole army was ultimately routed by its brave defenders, and obliged to retire. This was not the only foreign force of which Poggibonsi witnessed the retreat. Charles VIII. of France, returning from Naples, after his doubtful triumph in 1495, though he had already learned to fear, not merely the Tuscan republic, but the voice of its citizens, though he had seen Capponi tear the treaty of the weak and vain Piero de Medici, who had crouched to him, and had heard his threats answered with the manly menace, "Sound your trumpets, and we shall ring our bells;" still he hesitated to restore Pisa, which had been lent him in trust by Florence, although the brave Frate Savonarola, sent ambassador by the republic, boldly charged him with broken faith, and extorted fresh promises.

This remarkable man had predicted to the Florentines the coming of the French King for their

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GIROLAMO SAVONAROLA

FROM A PORTRAIT IN HIS CELL BY FRA BARTOLOMEO

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castigation, and Charles had good reason to remember his menaces afterwards at the passage of the Taro, when the forces of the republic intercepted him, and where his success was so doubtful, that his retreat bore the character of flight,* and some authors even assert that the French shewed the Italians they could run. The authentic Pignotti says, Charles listened with respect and deference to the rebukes of the monk, whom he caressed, and even wished to have carried away with him, which may be credited when it is remembered, that this prince was the son of Louis XI., and that the recovery of the holy sepulchre was the ultimate object of his Italian exedition. But Savonarola had a more important conquest in view—that of arresting the growing dissipation of the age, which was basely encouraged by the house of Medici, in the conviction that they could never establish absolute power without corrupting the morals of the republic, and weakening those principles of rectitude, which had been the main-stay of liberty throughout Italy.

Savonarola was a Dominican monk, and the fame of his piety and eloquence induced Lorenzo

* Botta Storia de Popoli Italiani.

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the Magnificent to invite him from Ferrara to Florence, where he arrived humbly on foot, and was soon appointed prior of the great convent of St. Mark. He had an undaunted spirit, and was determined on reform, moral and political. Roscoe complains of his arrogance, and want of respect towards his patron, and says, the divine word, from the lips of Savonarola, descended not as the dews of heaven—it was the piercing hail—the destroying sword—the herald of destruction. But he doubts the monk's having refused absolution to Lorenzo on his death-bed, in consequence of his hesitating to restore the republic to its former independence—a fact for which historians of the period contend. Roscoe distinctly says, that he asked and obtained his blessing, in the presence of Politiana—an assertion without proof, however, because no third person could be present on such an occasion.

After the expulsion of Piero de Medici, the preaching of Savonarola mainly contributed to the formation of a more popular government. He then devoted himself to reform the discipline of the church, and morals of the clergy; without quitting the pale of orthodoxy, he preached Christ and the Gospel precepts. This precursor of Luther was instigated by an ardent love for man-

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kind; he respected the rights of all, and his partizans believed him to be inspired. By the extraordinary power of his eloquence, notwithstanding a hoarse voice, an awkward gesture, and a strong Lombard accent, which was deemed barbarous by the refined Tuscans, he obtained a degree of popularity amazing even to himself; in deep humility he ascribed his success wholly to divine influence, and believed himself to be an instrument in God's hand to achieve a general reformation. Even children caught the prevailing enthusiasm, and followed him; much of the fanaticism which ensued* may be ascribed to his disciple, Dominico da Pescia, whose zeal was not tempered by prudence. Doubtless, these devoted men were raised to check the horrible vices then taught by precept and example from the Vatican, where the depraved Alexander VI., and his sons, the Borgia, had collected even the impure works of art, left by Tiberius, in the dark recesses of Capri, to gratify their licentiousness, while poison and the poignard ministered to their cupidity and private revenge.

The preaching of Savonarola and his friends was particularly directed against the sensuality of

* Pignotti.

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the age. A train of their juvenile partizans were instructed during the Carnival, to go from door to door, their young voices suing in humble accents for the resignation of whatever was profane, and every palace ceded its immoral pictures, prints, books, (the Decamerone amongst others,) whilst the fair sex yielded up all that female ingenuity had invented to augment or mar their natural beauties. Not only rouge, perfumes, cosmetics, and false hair were surrendered, but they despoiled themselves voluntarily of their head ornaments, stuffs from the Levant, and every unnecessary trapping.* In the same spirit both sexes freely gave up what they had learnt to consider implements of vain occupation—their draft and chess boards, playing cards, harps, and lutes, and many articles of luxurious furniture.

On the last day of the Carnival, the missionary children being dressed in white, with garlands of olives on their heads, and red crosses in their hands, went in procession to the piazza, singing songs of praise. Here a catafulco, or pyramid, had been raised of all the spoils they had collected, round

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* How the world turns round! The monks of this convent now compound and sell the very cosmetics, rouge, and perfumes, which the stern morality of Savonarola decried and exterminated.

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which they continued to sing. The citizens assembled, the trumpets sounded, and while acclamations of joy rent the air, four deputies, with flaming torches, lighted up the pyre! To the people it was a novelty, therefore more enjoyable than the usual corso, masks, and moccoletti of the day. It was Shrove Tuesday.

But the pontiff could not hear unmoved of Savonarola's influence.* Offended by the progress of reform, he threatened an interdict, and warned the Florentines, that if the monk was not silenced, their merchants should be banished from Rome, and their goods confiscated. This was their weak point. The pope knew their avidity for gain, and Savonarola was urged to abstain from preaching, as a measure of policy, for a time. His disciple, Dominico, then filled his pulpit, till stimulated by the urgent necessities of the period, the bold reformer returned to fulfil his mission, and preached against the vices of the Vatican and clergy more vehemently than before. Ex-

* Among the methods employed by the vindictive Alexander to destroy the popularity and weaken the ascendency of Savonarola, his emissaries were instructed to seize on every occasion of holding him to public contempt and derision. It is recorded that on Ascension Day, 1497, the skin of an ass, stuffed with straw, was found placed in the pulpit which the eloquent preacher was preparing to occupy.

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communication to him and to all who heard him, seem followed, but he was not silenced. The pope's envoy, though charged with the thunders of the Vatican, dared not advance beyond Sienna, fearing the frenzy of the people in favour of the monk.

The pope then sent Francis of Apulia, a Franciscan, to preach against him, and Savonarola was ruined by the mistaken zeal of his fanatic disciple, who imprudently offered to maintain the prophecies and doctrines of his master to be inspired from heaven, by the ordeal of fire!

Some authors say the proposition came from the Franciscan; at all events he eagerly seized upon it, but said he would only risk his life in competition with Savonarola, who highly disapproving the presumption of such an appeal, refused. However, all parties were clamorous for an exciting crisis; even women and children urged to be admitted to the proof on both sides. The signoria forbad that more than two should try the ordeal. The graver citizens demurred against an experiment so contrary to religion, humanity, and good sense. Giovanni Canacci suggested, that it would be sufficient test of the divine will, without risking their lives, to prepare two vessels of tepid water, and let the supremacy be conceded to him

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who comes out with dry garments! However, two piles of wood and faggots, fearful to look on, were erected in the piazza del Grand Duca; they were eighty feet in length and breadth, and five feet high. A passage of a braccio* was only left between, for the victims to walk through, in the midst of the flames. The population assembled—the loggia was divided off for the rival Franciscans and Dominicans. The latter arrived chanting canticles and bearing the Host, which the Franciscans refused to permit to be carried through the fire. The Dominicans contended that their representative should not be separated from their God, when his divine aid was most needed. Hours passed in endless disputation; at length heavy rain fell, which drenched the piles, and the multitude dispersed, with murmurs, being disappointed of the expected miracle. Savonarola's convent was beseiged by his enemies next day. He was arrested; the government yielded to the pressing demands of the Pope, who sent judges from Rome to condemn him. The trial commenced with torture, which poor Savonarola, worn out by the fever of anxiety, was too weak to

* Two feet.

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sustain. He was condemned, with two disciples, to death, hanged, and burnt in the same square where a pile had been raised six weeks before to procure his triumph. This cruel martyrdom occurred on the 23d of May, 1498 !!!

Its victims, though too soon called hence, had lived long enough to awaken many to think on the errors of their lives, and prepare the way, like Petrarch and Dante, for the reception of those truths which shone forth even in Italy, twenty years after. It is remarkable, that on the day of Savonarola's arrest, Charles VIII. died in Paris, fulfilling the prediction, that death would overtake that prince for his bad faith. The monk's prophecies of the reformation attest his foresight at least. His loss was generally deplored, even by those who were consenting to his death. I hestated at first to dwell on Savonarola's history, because it is alluded to by Roscoe, but finding the Italian historians, particularly the authentic Pignotti, much more favourable to this remarkable man, and fuller in detail than our countryman, I thought a sketch of him would interest you. There is a quarto life of the reformer amongst the prohibited books, if you are curious to know more of him. Some manuscripts of his sermons were lately found in a private library at Florence,

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but it is on record that he did not write his discourses, and the fact that some of them are in existence, is a proof that short-hand was known and practised amongst his disciples. Tiraboschi has quoted a few passages, as models of what he calls "Eloquenza Sacra."* His style is described by Pignotti as the perfection of pulpit oratory; and this candid historian makes an edifying comparison between the eloquent, heart-penetrating, and awakening appeals of the devoted monk, and the turgid declamation of the Italian church in the present day. He also relates, that till the middle of the last century, the site of Savonarola's cruel death was annually found, on the morning of the 23d of May, strewed with flowers, proving that a sentimental respect for his memory still existed amongst the descendants of those who had heard truth from his lips; nor is the feeling extinct; a literary acquaintance has assured us, that once returning from a late conversazione at Florence, in a friend's carriage, the coachman was directed to drive round by the Piazza del Grand Duca, there descending, his companions walked solemnly to the fatal spot, and scattered around, in silence, his bunch of violets. It was the early morning of

* Teraboschi, "Storia Literaria."

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the 23d of May: the devotee was the Italian Sophocles. You have read his marvellous "Arnoldo," and can appreciate the act. We are indebted to the erudite Padre Bandini, prior of St. Mark's, at Florence, for seeing several relics of Savonarola preserved in a glass case, in the convent; his white robe and black cowl are there, also a hair-cloth girdle he is supposed to have worn. There is besides a fragment of the scaffold on which he suffered death. The prior, as a great favour, permitted us to visit his cell, which is not generally shown to females; we found its present inhabitant to be a young monk, who occupies himself with painting, and who has since made us a small copy, in oils, of a portrait by Fra Bartolomeo, which is preserved in the cell. This eminent painter was impressed at the early age of twenty by the preaching of Savonarola, and embraced his doctrines. He was amongst the 500 citizens assembled in the convent of St. Mark's to defend him, the day of this arrest. Heart-stricken by the martyr's death, he assumed the habit of St. Dominic, and retired to the convent at Prado, vowing never to touch pencil or canvas more.* It is said that he burnt the works

* Pignotti.

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he had by him, and all his implements, and like other distinguished men who had espoused the cause of reform, he thought there was nothing left worth living for in the world except a conviction of its worthlessness. Fra Bartolomeo mourned in heart, and even the friendship of Raphael, whom he instructed in the art of perspective, did not console him for the loss of his first friend. After some years, at the solicitation of his brethren, he consented to paint again, but he worked with a sadness which even success could not brighten.

That beautiful painter, Fra Angelica, was also a Dominican monk, and refused a bishopric offered him by Pope Eugene IV. He devoted his art wholly to embellishing sacred subjects, and is reported to have always painted his touching representatives of the Saviour on his knees. When Michael Angelo saw his "Annunciation" in the church of St. Dominic, at Fiesola, he said, "no man could have painted that figure without a foretaste of heaven."

Fra Benedetto, another Dominican, and a painter in miniature, though little known now for his talent, is still remembered for having armed himself on the day of Savonarola's arrest to defend him, and only returned his sword into the scabbard in compliance with the strong remonstrance of his

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friend who reproved him that "a monk should only use spiritual weapons," forbidding his following him at the scaffold with these words, "Fra Girolamo, for charity's sake, come not. I die for the love of Christ."

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LETTER XXXI.

Villa Broderick, Bagni di Lucca,
January, 1843.

Our correspondence has been interrupted for more than a year, by the hand of death! You have heard of our reiterated bereavements. You know from others that our beautiful "evening star" has set to this world, to rise and shine for ever in the regions of eternal light! My beloved mother was some months declining before I could allow myself to think I must lose her. We removed to Florence, and every thing was done that human aid could effect, but the consumption of advanced age was not to be arrested. She was ready, nay yearning, to be with her Saviour. Her death was like a sweet sleep: may our last hours be like hers! Her whole life had been one of heroic devotedness to her family, under remark-

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able trials, and of humble devotion to her God! Her career of usefulness ceased but with her existence. She retained a lively interest in every thing concerning her family and friends to the last. Her principle, which she inherited from a patriarchal father, was fully borne out, "To live to the duties of this world as if she were never to leave it—to the next, as if she were to depart on the morrow." It was only three days before her blest spirit left its tenement of clay, that she called for the letters I had written to you during our last tour, and desired me to read them to her once more. She was with us only during a part of that journey, and I had kept copies of them to amuse her. She had often before expressed a wish that they should be published. After hearing them all over once more, she said the information they contained might prove useful to travellers, and would at least interest many old friends at home. Impelled to fulfil her least wish, we had, some time before, thought of having them printed for the benefit of the infant schools abroad, but some difficulty stood in the way of that plan, because the *powers that be* are still tenacious of English interference with native education; I have now to propose to you permitting them to be published by subscription, to finish our English chapel and

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cemetery, and to assist to pay the large debt the trustees have incurred. So long a period has elapsed since I have been able to continue our correspondence, that you are not yet aware of the improvements which have taken place in our happy valley. In an early letter I remember I introduced you to its worthy inhabitants, and told you our hopes and wishes of having a permanent place of worship established; I then made you acquainted with the industrious habits and customs of the mountaineers, their piety and morality, and how zealously their spiritual interests are watched over. I am now happy to narrate what has been achieved here to remind us of ours, and to assure the native population that we do not live without God in the world.

When we first entered the duchy of Lucca from Rome, in 1834, there was no chaplain at these baths, nor even the hope of having one. In the month of July a passing clergyman gave us two services in his own sitting room. The other Sabbaths of a long summer were as unmarked by any public observance of the day, on the part of the English, as if we had all been heathens! This unchristian state of things has, I am grateful to say, passed away. We have now a permanent chaplain from May to October; an excellent

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house to induce superior clergymen to undertake the duty, and a large airy and commodious chapel, quite adequate to the accommodation of the annually increasing congregation. It may interest you to hear by what degrees we advanced from the forlorn state above described to that of a prosperous English parish!

During the first five summers we were solely depending for divine service on the zeal and kindness of any clergyman who either came at our request, or who happened to be passing the season here. A small subscription was always collected for the seats, which these good men generally distributed amongst the poor, after paying the sum required for the apartment and attendants. By a particular Providence we have had always enlightened, exemplary, and faithful ministers; but it might have been otherwise, and we heartily rejoiced when the Rev. George Robbins consented at our request, to become the permanent chaplain at the baths. A pastor thus assured to us, the next point was a place of worship. We had hitherto been obliged to content ourselves with an apartment in a hotel, which was inevitably noisy; the room was besides exposed to the sun, very expensive, and much too small for the augmented congregation.

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In 1839 the Lucchese government was induced to grant free permission for a building being erected, containing rooms for a clergyman, and an apartment for divine service, according to the English ritual. There is still a strong objection to allowing those of the reformed church to erect *bona fide* chapels in Italy, though one enlightened prince has surmounted it, and the Leghorn merchants have been permitted to build a handsome church with a portico and dome, which adorns the city, and bears ample testimony of the growing toleration which distinguishes the age. However, we were fully satisfied that our place of worship "should be called a house." Lord Edward Chichester was passing that summer here with his family; his lordship entered warmly into our interests, and assisted to collect subscriptions.

Doctor Deaken, our excellent physician, pleaded successfully in Rome during the winter, and the suit was renewed here the following summer, when the contributions were deemed sufficiently ample to authorise our chaplain, Dr. Deakin, and Colonel Stisted, (the appointed trustees,) to purchase a piece of ground, and commence operations. It was particularly requested by the Ediles, who superintend the public works, that the building should be handsome to embellish the place, and it

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was deemed a duty to comply with the suggestion, as far as prudence permitted. The plan of Signor Pardini, a Lucchese architect, who had travelled in England, was selected. The façade is that of a small Venetian palace, with Gothic windows and a porch. The whole of the front of the building, 70 feet long, and 40 feet high, is occupied by the chapel, while the back front is divided into floors for the chaplain's accoodmmation. The frieze, the Gothic ornaments, the pinnacles, and moulding of the windows, with the English arms, also the porch, were beautifully executed, at a small expense, in baked clay, at a manufactory near Lucca. Terra Cotta, when painted, becomes as durable as stone in this country. The building is altogether chaste and handsome; when the cypresses grow, it will have more the character of an ecclesiastical edifice, which is all it wants to satisfy English eyes.

The builder had bound himself to complete his contract for £1,000, but as is the case in all countries, he exceeded his estimate largely, pleading the discovery of a spring of water under the foundation, a mistake in the measurement; and the fall of the ground to the rere, involving the necessity of a fourth story to the dwelling-house, with more rooms than were required, or agreed for.

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The case would have authorized a law suit, on the part of the trustees, but they were strongly advised to compromise for £400 more, as the value of the work is certainly in the building to that amount. The whole expense, after fitting up the chapel provisionally, and purchasing a piece of ground for a cemetery on the opposite side of the river, has been £1,600. The sum is considered moderate for all that has been accomplished, but the subscriptions, as yet, cover but half the expenditure. Pray, plead our cause in England; the debt is still large; the cemetery is yet to be laid out, and the interior of the chapel is not even painted, except over the Communion Table, where the Decalogue and Lord's Prayer are inscribed, and in the Gothic arch opposite the entrance, where the Creed appears.

The native population is much impressed by the simplicity and solemnity of our service; many pass the threshold every Sunday, and seem to observe with veneration, though they cannot understand. I was particularly struck during the erection of the building with the pride and pleasure the labourers seemed to take in the work. I never met a carter on the road with his load of sand, that he did not tell me passing by, that it was "for the church," though we, in complai-

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sance say, the "English House." The architect, in his plan, called it "the palace of the English nation."

There were many public works going on here at the same time, and several sad and fatal accidents occurred: it was a source of great thankfulness, and often observed, that amongst the many workmen employed for our building, not one sustained the slightest injury. The chapel was at once placed by the trustees under the patonage of the Bishop of London, to whom all the accounts were submitted. It is now transferred by his lordship to the recently appointed Bishop of Gibraltar, from whom we are anxiously expecting a visit. It is delightful to observe the progress that toleration is making, and to feel the security which now attends the maintenance of our pure religion abroad. The kind indulgence granted us, will prove, I trust, "like the quality of mercy, twice blest—blessing him who gives, and we who receive."

In a country, drained of its resources as Italy was by friend and foe during the war, the concourse of strangers, which curiosity, or want of health, brought here after the peace, proved as important a relief as oil to an expiring lamp. The government of every state gave facilities and welcome to

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those who came to spend, and thus pour their abundance into the exhausted coffers of the state; but the English were, notwithstanding, as obnoxious in Italy as the poor despised and depressed Jews. The people knew no difference between us, nor were their teachers then disposed to enlighten them. This arose, I am convinced, in a great degree, from total ignorance that we are Christians. How often have I been asked, if we really believed in the Saviour, and still oftener, if the Holy Spirit entered into our creed? It is but a few years ago that two girls, from a village near this, went to Leghorn as servants, in two families of the reformed church; their respective fathers were refused absolution the following Easter, for having permitted their children to live with heretics, and ordered by the priest to go and bring them back! One parent had tact enough to reply, that he had no objection, provided the confessor would engage to pay him annually what his daughter then earned. The other less astute, actually went to Leghorn, but the girl refused to return, assuring her father, that her religion was not interfered with; and the priest finding his threats unavailing, was obliged to withdraw them. *That* girl has now been eight years in our service, and is a treasure of fidelity and devotedness; she

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has often assured me, as a proof how the English are now trusted and respected, that no question was ever put to her at the confessional regarding the families she has served. The priesthood know that we require our servants to attend to their spiritual duties, instead of interfering with their faith, and they are satisfied. Another instance will more thoroughly exemplify, that the English were only known as enemies and heretics at the end of the war. We were intimately acquainted with a Venetian at Ghent, a scholar and a soldier, who had been one of Ugo Foscolo's class at Pavia, and afterwards his comrade in Beauharnois' royal guard. He has often assured us, that before Waterloo, he had believed the English to be not only godless heretics, but inhuman savages. On that awful day he was amongst the desperately wounded, and found himself lying in a ditch, next an English officer of dragoons, to whom surgical aid and refreshment were soon brought by a faithful servant; but seeing a fellow-sufferer in a worse plight than his own, he refused both until poor Salvadori had been assisted. This trait, which was worthy a countryman of the immortal Sidney, excited the Italian's amazement, even in his miserable predicament, and when it was followed up by kind interest in his recovery at Brussels, and

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by pecuniary aid to carry him home, he began to believe, for the first time, that the English had pretentions to the name of Christian.

In fact, in the middle of the last century, a family of the reformed church could scarcely rear a child, amidst the darkness and bigotry which disgraced Italy. There is one notorious incident on record, which I shall relate, because it finely contrasts with the present happier state of things.

Amongst the followers of the house of Stuart, there was a faithful adherent of the name of Hadfield. The fallen line, having no better return to make him for years of service, established him in a hotel on the Arno, at Florence, now the *Quatre-nations*, to which the partizans of the royal exiles in consequence resorted. Mr. Hadfield had recently married: the birth of a son soon completed his domestic happiness. There could not be a finer, healthier boy. After a few months the child feel asleep one day, and awoke no more—his death was in no way to be accounted for! The grief and disappointment of his parents, only gave way to the birth of another infant the following year; it was also a boy, blooming, and full of life. He also slept the sleep of death, to wake no more! A third was born, and the same myste-

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rious fate awaited him: the horror of the heart-stricken parents can only be imagined; "the shaft flew thrice, and thrice their peace was slain." The following year the olive branch was again held forth in mercy. A fourth child was vouchsafed—it was a girl. The parents watched and prayed, but trembled! Only a few weeks had passed over when the nurse, to whom the infant had been intrusted, ran to them one day, her countenance full of horror, her lips livid, she could not articulate, but held out the babe to its mother. After some restoratives had been given, the poor creature recovered sufficiently to tell, that having left the nursery for a moment, while the child slept, and without her shoes, for fear of waking her, she was amazed on her return, with noiseless step, to find old Brigida, the laundress of the hotel, leaning over the cradle, with a vial in her hand. The crone, unconscious of her presence, was talking to herself. The nurse could distinctly hear words to this effect—"I must snatch another heretic from hell! Drink my child, and join your brothers, they are angels in paradise—the Blessed Virgin waits for you." The wretch was in the act of applying the vial to the infant's lips, when the nurse darted forwards, snatched up the child, and fled! Old Brigida

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fled too, but it was to a convent—a sanctuary! where her guilt was deemed meritorious, and her redemption secure. She died soon after in the odour of sanctity.

The child was saved, but the affrighted parents, obliged to live abroad, had no resource except having her, and all their children born afterwards, baptized according to the rites of the Roman church. Their daughter proved of precocious mind. Her talents and beauty rendered her well known in after years in England: she was the celebrated Maria Cosway. I never saw her, for she had returned to Italy in my childhood, but as I before mentioned, I had the good fortune to have her estimable and no less accomplished sister, Mrs. Combe, with me, until the age of fifteen, therefore is the story familiar to me. If I had not pressing interests to discuss just now, I could let loose my pen, and give you many interesting details of those ladies, and of Mr. Combe, one of the best prose writers of his day, and in later life known as the author of that pleasant work, "Syntax's Tour." I was reminded, the first year we were in Florence, of the sad tragedy of the children, by the late illustrious traveller and author, Penante, who had known the family well, both at Florence and in England. I made him relate the

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particulars of the story to me, and we rejoiced together that the world had now become more enlightened. The fact is, I find, still remembered in Italy, but alluded to with horror. If you want further proof of the retreat of illiberal prejudices, read the preface to Mr. Burgess's "Lent Lectures on St. Paul," delivered in Rome, where he elegantly describes the state of public feeling when he first became chaplain there, and how prejudice gradually receded, as the oblations and charitable contributions of the English flowed into the thousand channels of want and disease inevitable to an impoverished city. We used to attend at our chapel the first Monday in every month, when Mr. Burgess received the indigent poor, amongst whom he divided the sacrament money. The claimants were so numerous that he was obliged to scrutinize into the respective wants of each by personal observations, not only inquiring, but visiting their poor tenements again and again, in order to select the strongest claims. I once sent him a list of five families, whose wretchedness seemed to me extreme: in his reply, notwithstanding his pressing avocations, he most kindly found time to sketch me the history of each, for he already knew them all, and had been obliged to decline assisting them, because every

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case had some mitigating circumstance which I had not discovered, to render its claim less urgent than those of several hundred others, whom he, at least, enabled to pay their rent. It was edifying and beautiful to listen to the words of kindness and consolation with which Mr. Burgess accompanied the relief he dispensed to each, rendering his alms a moral as well as physical blessing.*

No one who has not lived abroad, and experienced the absence of such advantages, can be aware of the immense importance to ourselves of finding, wherever we wander, a spiritual pastor and place of worship; and, mere creatures as most of us are, how we retrograde, when the things which belong to our peace are not continually presented to us. Much has been said and written on the baneful influence of continental life to the English mind. After twelve years' observance and experience, we have come to the con-

* The present chaplain in Rome, Mr. Hutchinson, follows in the footsteps of his admirable predecessor, who left him his mantle when called to Chelsea. I rejoice to hear that by prudence and judicious conduct, these excellent men have so far won the confidence of the *powers that be*, that a subscription is now in progress for erecting a large and commodious chapel in Rome! The present, a hired apartment, though large as could be found, and capable of accommodating above 1,000 persons, is quite too small for the congregation.

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clusion, that the light and worldly, who wander long abroad, become vitiated and dissolute, losing whatever restraint and sense of decorum the habits of society at home inspire; whereas those who bring with them good principles, some knowledge and respect for its precepts, will always advance in piety and morality. I have known many whose impressions have received their deepest tincture on the continent, and who have returned home better than they left it.

Let it not be supposed for a moment that the Italians are to blame if the English live dissipated idle lives abroad. Whatever there has been to lament in the institutions of this country, and the private lives of the aristocracy, society is never offended by any display of immorality, and the external decorum, regarding the unmarried at least, is not only strict but rigorous; besides the superior Italian families, except strangers are strongly recommended, and particularly seek them, are not accessible. Their habits and hours are different; few are rich enough to entertain, and still fewer are disposed to open their houses to promiscuous intimacies. The lighter pleasure-hunters of Florence, Rome, and Naples, will go where they are invited, and gay young men circulate every where, but the lightest and the

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vainest expect to find in us sobriety of conduct, and rational habits; our example, in fact, is baneful to them, if we do not acquire a moral pre-eminence, and show more in actions than in words, that we are a reformed church.

The English have little idea how strictly they are observed, and how sensitively Italians remark any deviation from duty on our parts. Even young foreigners, whose minds are too often warped by infidelity, look up to us for conscientious adherence to our own principles. The observance of our Sabbath, for instance, they all highly respect, and think lightly and indifferently of those who suffer themselves to fall into the neglect and profanation of it. No Englishman has ever shown himself at the theatre on a Sunday evening, without losing the good opinion of every native who saw or heard of him there, and no English clergyman has ever played the man of fashion, or the worldling, in Italy, who has not brought upon himself a variety of animadversions little honorable to his cloth, or the religion of which he is a minister. "*So your priest gives a ball to-night*," was the sarcasm the young Count C—— addressed to us, the first time we were in Florence, many years ago—"*is that apostolic?*" I trust I have now said enough to assure

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you, that if an enlightened devoted clergy, and establishment of churches be important objects at home, they are still more so abroad, for here we have others than ourselves to consider, and we have the dignity of our religion to sustain.

Will not this assurance engage you to assist us in finishing what has been so well begun in this happy valley, by collecting subscriptions for our chapel, or permitting my poor letters to be published. I am well aware how numerous and pressing are the claims on every purse at home, but if the case be fairly weighed, none will be found stronger, as regards Christianity, than those of the continent, where so many thousand of our compatriots now wander, many of them the more exposed to temptations, because without occupation, all requiring the ordinances of our church, and the restraints of a moral religion to steady and dignify their walk.

NOTE.—Since the date of the foregoing letter, our amiable pastor, Mr. Robbins, has been induced to accept the Florence chaplaincy, a more bracing air in winter, than Pisa, having been ordered for his wife's health. He has reluctantly left the chapel which his zeal and activity had so greatly contributed to establish, and we sincerely regret him. An able and zealous chaplain has been lately appointed, who will, we hope, compensate to us—the Reverend Aurial Barker, who is highly gifted as a preacher of the Gospel, and calculated to do much good.

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LETTER XXXII.

Villa Broderick,
June, 1844.

We have just had a most interesting visit from Theodore Döhler; he returned only yesterday from Copenhagen, where he has been exercising his brilliant musical talents. I have mentioned our early acquaintance with this estimable young man in a former letter. His respectable father was one of the Prince of Lucca's preceptors, and of the Lutheran church. He died in May, and became the second tenant of the cemetery. His excellent son came to mourn over his grave, and commune with the friends to whom he thinks he is indebted for his parent's remains finding repose in this valley. Our cemetery is just the spot which a heart-stricken mourner would select for the last earthly home of a cherished object. The

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sublime stillness of the air is unbroken save by the gentle river murmuring at its base, while a majestic mountain, rising behind like a merciful and compassionate Providence, folds with extended arms, in its mantle of forest, the young and suppliant cemetery, sueing for shelter and protection at its feet. Even day's too garish eye is, in pity, veiled with verdure from the sacred inclosure. An avenue of cypresses conducts the funeral train by a gentle ascent to the little chapel where the last obsequies are performed. Time will improve the hallowed spot in beauty as in interest.

It is memorable that little more than two years ago, attracted by its beauty, we had formed the project of purchasing that portion of the forest, from which the river only divides us, and erecting there a cottage, just where the little chapel now stands. A feeling that our beloved mother would prefer a higher situation than our present domicile, and that, building for ourselves, we might ensure her larger rooms, determined us to the undertaking. An architect was consulted and a plan drawn, but her blest spirit was already bending heaven-ward to brighter mansions, though we perceived it not. The spot of earth may yet be our resting-place! Would it had been laid out in time to receive her—we mourn!

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After a melancholy visit to the cemetery, our young friend returned to pass the day with us; we found him looking old, for his years, but in character unchanged, and quite unspoiled by the world's adulation. He talked to us warmly of the kindness which greeted him every where, but his mind reverted again and again to his father's grave. He said he had brought from Paris, lithographs of all the tombs at Père la Chaise, to select a monument from. He then enquired how funds were raised for our chapel and cemetery? and when I named the debt, and imparted to him what I was humbly attempting for its liquidation, "You must let me assist you," said he, "why should I not give a concert to aid an object which is now so interesting to me." The proposition was like himself, and we have accepted it.*

To divert his mind from dwelling on his recent loss, we asked him about an article in a French newspaper, which insinuated, that a fair lady had been so desirous of possessing a remembrance of him, that she picked his pocket! He smiled at the absurdity, and said the evil was much more

* The following month M. Döhler sent his fine Leipsic piano-forte, and gave a concert for the benefit of the cemetery, which produced a hundred crowns—concerts rarely succeed so well here.

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serious than a woman's caprice, for he had in fact lost his purse! We then shewed him an article in the *Messaggero* of Lucca, taken from a Berlin newspaper, giving an account of his playing, with List, at the Prussian court, and contrasting their musical powers.

Döhler is there represented as the beautiful genius of harmony, ruling his instrument with strength, spirit, and dignity, and drawing forth its powers with deep feeling and exquisite sensibility—as master of his art, yet submissive to its laws. While List is personified as its tyrant lord, running like a demon along the ridge of the precipice, hurling rocks in massive ruin, and deafening his hearers, while he keeps their nerves in ceaseless agitation.

Our young friend tried to read the flattering panegyric, but soon threw it down, saying, "it was so long," and opening the piano gave us the best comment on the truth of the text, in a heart-touching voluntary. His powers of hand are marvellous; he is, what I believe is called, double-jointed; he can bend back his fingers as others bend them forward, but he seems to doubt that the physical faculty adds any thing to his strength for playing. He is going to England in 1844, where I trust he will be fully appreciated and

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sought in private life, for he possesses worth far beyond his art.

The love you and many kind friends at home have cherished for my lamented mother, prompts me to share with you the greatest consolation we have received since our bereavement—a descriptive portrait of her, from the feeling and eloquent pen of our valued friend, Mrs. Frederick Ricketts. I have extracted it from her "Retrospective glance at the Baths of Lucca," a sketch she permitted to be published for a charitable purpose. She is herself, alas! now a mourner, and needing the sympathy she has so fully bestowed.

I am also grateful for the possession of a fine portrait in oils, painted for me by Mrs. Kennedy Lawrie, an amiable and accomplished Florentine lady, who was dear to my mother, and capable of appreciating her beauties of mind and person.

If I have too often saddened my page with allusions to one we have lost, I trust to find an apologist in the hearts of my readers. To those who have known her, the theme will not be unwelcome, and they will recognize her lineaments in the following portrait:—

"It was in Florence we first saw a lovely old lady, serene as its skies, and nearly as brilliant as its sun. There we had only opportunity to admire

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her readiness to greet strangers, recommended to her notice by her daughter, whom we had previously met in a passing visit to the Baths of Lucca, when securing our summer dwelling. But it was afterwards, when we were all assembled in the vale of Lucca, that she rose upon us in the full resplendence of her charms. Me-thinks I see her, on those evenings when her daughter received the prince and a chosen few, entering the salon from her own apartment—her venerable and graceful figure erect as in early youth—clothed in black flowing silk, her snow-white cap, with its crimped rolls, and its gently elevated crown, beneath which two thin bands of her own hair (the colour of a golden cloud at sunset, when fading into grey) were folded down her high calm forehead: then those sweet, mild, sky-tinted eyes, beaming forth serenity and benevolence; the delicately-shaped aquiline nose—the mouth, the very region of the most placid, yet cheerful smiles—the pale, clear skin, with its blush of dying bloom, no longer boasting its former smoothness, yet so tenderly touched by the lapse of seventy years, that it seemed as if time had but breathed on it in passing, reluctant to lay his hand upon her. One was sorry that she had not lived in the days of Titian and Vandyke, that the mortal part might

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be perpetuated on earth after her spirit had sought its eternal home. I never before saw such an union of attractive sweetness and exquisite dignity of demeanour—such a complete assimilation of the seriousness befitting old age, with the freshness of feeling we look for alone in youth, so that there was nothing incongruous in the expressions which fell from her lips, indicating the constant presence to her mind of the approaching close of life, with the almost child-like joyousness with which she entered into every scheme of innocent amusement. I remember we had agreed to pass a day amongst the mountains around Lugliono, and she consented to join our party. The way, though not very long, was steep and rugged, and some of us ascended on horseback; she was amongst the equestrians, and no one made so light of the difficulties, was so invariably good-humoured, wandered about so perseveringly, was so little annoyed by the heat, required so little attention from others, or so thoroughly enjoyed herself. Once we missed her as we were widely separated amongst the paths of a chestnut wood, and after a whole half-hour's search, we discovered her resting on the summit of a precipitous hill, quietly contemplating the noble scene around, with her box full of brilliant butterflies of *her own*

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catching. A young female friend, whom she had brought with her from Ireland, to be benefited by the more equable climate of the sunny south, who accompanied her in all her wanderings, greatly amused us one day by the simplicity and *naiveté* with which she spoke of her venerable companion's erratic inclinations. 'She quite alarms me sometimes,' said Miss Simpson, with great seriousness; 'she pursues an insect, or a flower, over rocks and down banks—no matter where—without ever thinking how she is to return again; it is really dangerous—*she strays so*.' By general consent, this woman of rare attractions was designated by us as the Evening Star, and never did I gaze upon the pure brilliancy of the heavenly planet, but I thought of its prototype on earth, as serene, and almost as bright."

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[NOTE.]

SIGNOR ROSINI.

Signor Rosini is Professor of Belles Lettres at the University of Pisa, and one of the first Italian prose writers of the day; his publications are numerous, and he is now engaged in a great work, which will hand down his name to posterity—the history of Italian painting. It is a *pendant* of our lamented friend, Count Leopold Cicognara's History of Sculpture, and a treasure which no one who loves the arts should be without. The professor has divided his work into epochs rather than schools; he traces the progress of painting from the crude pictorial representations of the Greeks in the dark ages, down to the present century.

The first period is from Giunto, of Pisa, to Massaccio; the second from Lippi to Raphael; the third from Giulio Romano to Baroccio, and the fourth from the Caracci to Appiani, ending with his celebrated painting, the *Apotheosis of Napoleon.*

The work will contain four hundred engravings in outline. We have already eight volumes of letter-press in octavo, interspersed with illustrations, and five in Atlas form, containing the most correct and beautiful delinea-

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tions of all the frescoes and great pictures of Italy, many of them now published for the first time, and obtained at great expenditure of time and money; yet the entire cost of the work, which will be completed next year, is only about £12 English. It is a decided source of happiness to possess upon one's table the whole Italian school, admirably treated and finely illustrated. There never has been a complete work of the kind before. It is dedicated to Louis Philippe. The French Institute have pronounced their approbation, and the Legion of Honour has been adjudged to the erudite author.

In the midst of this colossal work, Signor Rosini has lately published his eleven romances of "Ugolino," and has announced another which will come forth in numbers this year, "Charles VIII., or the siege of Pisa."

Rome, March 4th, 1845.

The foregoing notice was, by mistake, returned to the author, with a portion of MS., and came back too late to be prefixed to the letter from St. Gemignano, to which it belonged.

THE END.

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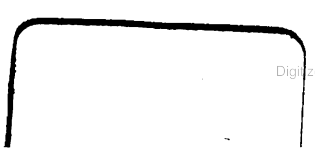

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